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January

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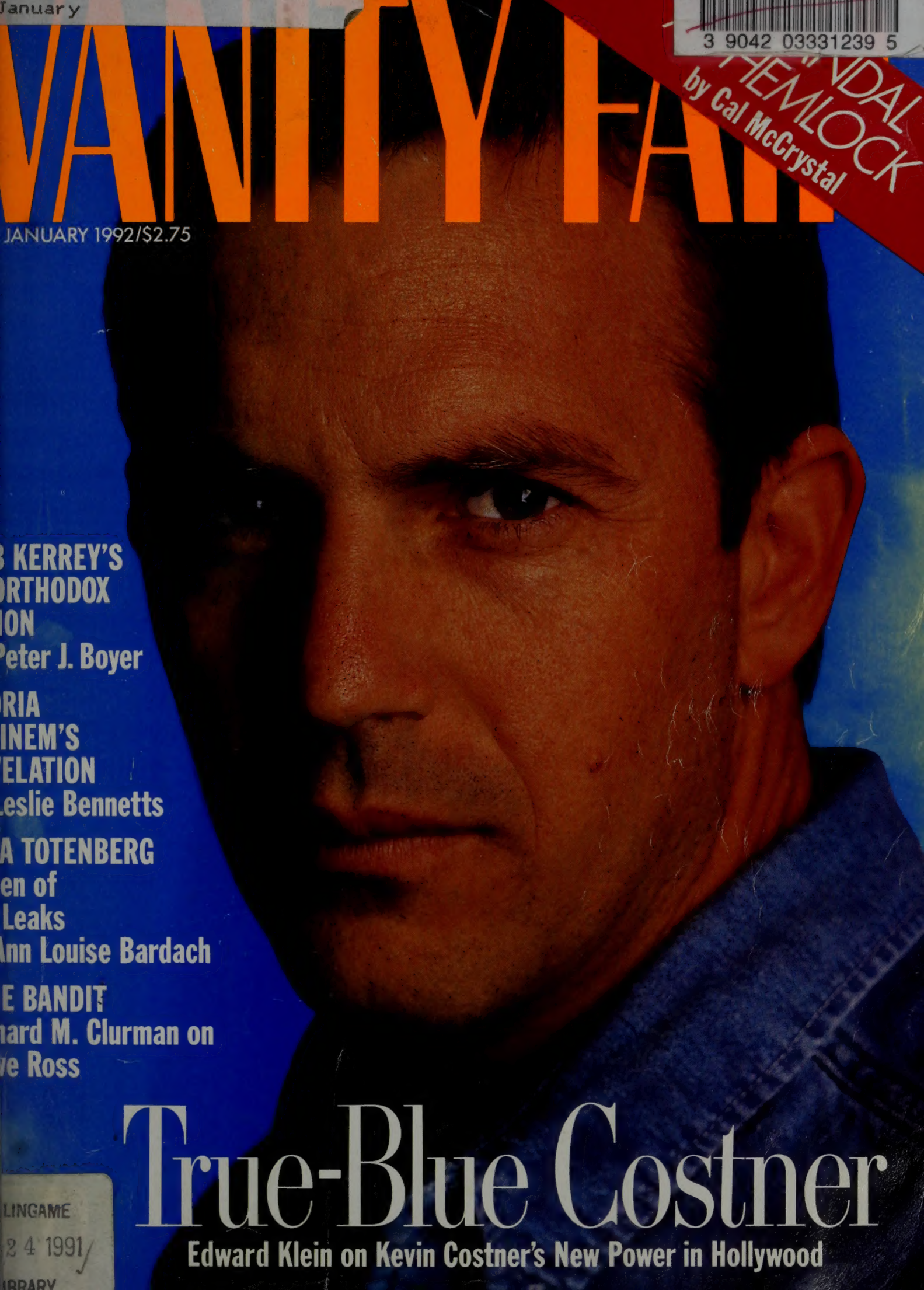

True-Blue Costner

Edward Klein on Kevin Costner's New Power in Hollywood

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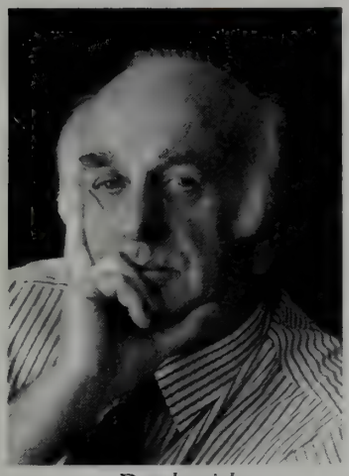

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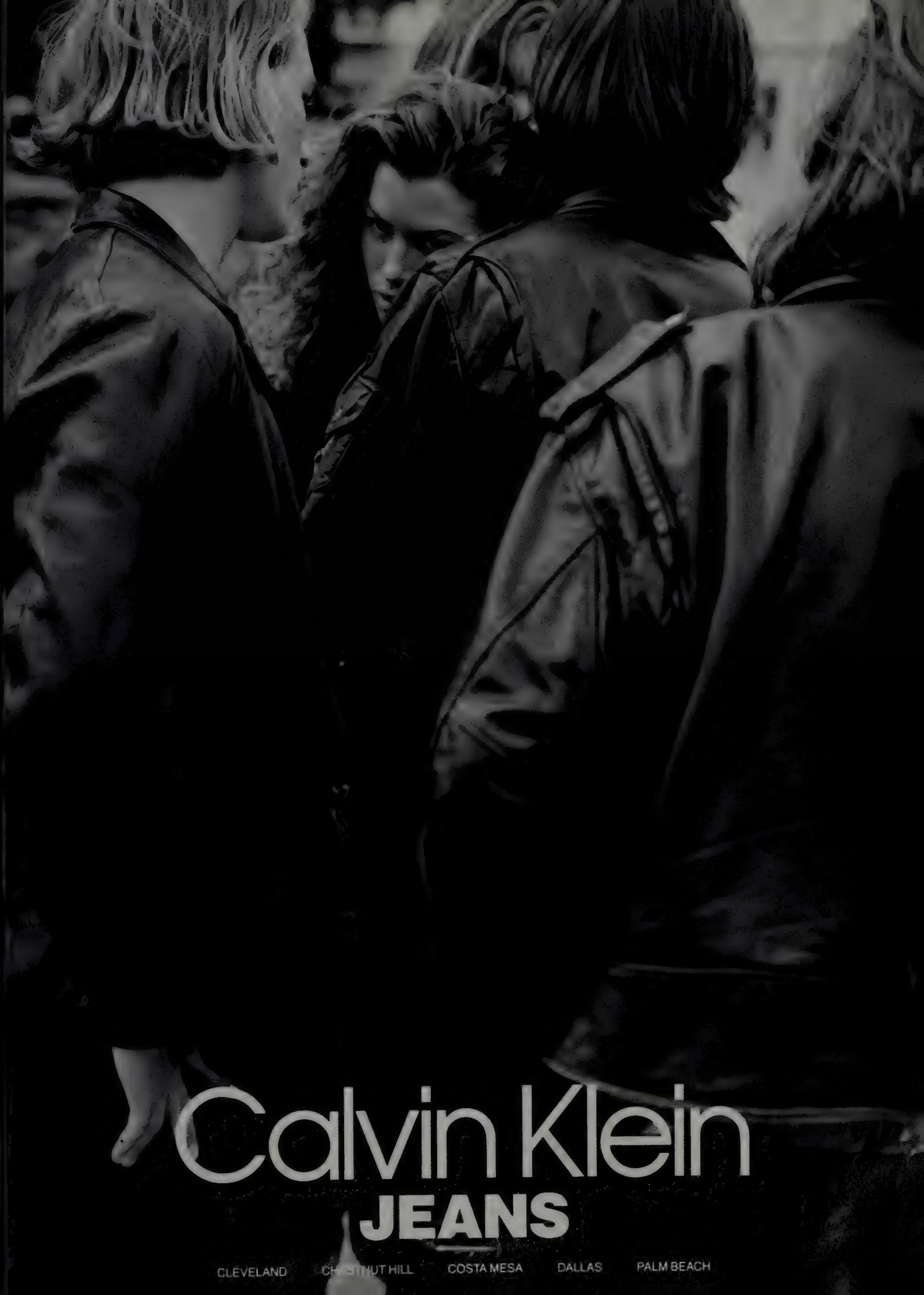
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Contributors

Ann Louise Bardach is an author, screenwriter, and investigative reporter who lives in Santa Barbara.

Leslie Bennetts has covered the women's movement for twenty years for a variety of newspapers and magazines, and has known Gloria Steinem, the subject of her piece this month, since the early 1970s.

Peter J. Boyer is working on a nonfiction book for Random House.

Richard M. Clurman spent more than twenty years at Time Inc. as a writer, reporter, chief of worldwide Time-Life correspondents, and senior editorial executive. He is the author of *To the End of Time: The Seduction and Conquest of a Media Empire*, to be published next month by Simon & Schuster, and excerpted in this issue. "The high-stakes corporate battle for control of Time Inc. not only resulted in the biggest media merger ever," he says, "but also brought into play clashing cultures and personalities, resulting in Time Warner, an odd corporate couple with access to more minds and emotions than any other commercial enterprise on earth."

Fredric Dannen's *Hit Men: Power Brokers and Fast Money Inside the Music Business* (Vintage) won the twenty-fourth annual ASCAP–Deems Taylor Award for excellence in music journalism. Of this month's piece, he says, "It's natural for journalists on the crime beat to be overly sympathetic to prosecutors, and it's very easy to be co-opted by them. That's the only explanation as to why this story hasn't been told before."

Trip Gabriel writes about crime, sports, and film.

Anthony Haden-Guest spent part of his childhood in France. "I was far more educated by French films than by Hollywood ones," he says of his story this month. "I grew up equally fascinated by the movie world and the art world. In Claude Berri, I found a rare figure who moves in both."

Lynn Hirschberg covers the business of Hollywood and the media for *V.F.* Of Lili Zanuck, her subject this month, she says, "Women in Hollywood interest me, because Hollywood is still a boys' club. By directing her first feature, Zanuck has penetrated that world."

James Kaplan is working on a book about John F. Kennedy International Airport for William Morrow.

Edward Klein is writing a book about the Etan Patz case, which he covered in the June 1991 *V.F.*

Cal McCrystal, a Belfast-born journalist, is a special-features writer and columnist for the London *Independent*. He has written extensively on terrorism and other crimes of violence.

Richard M. Clurman on what Time Inc. didn't know about Warner's Steve Ross, page 110.

Lynn Hirschberg on Lili Zanuck and Rush, *her directorial debut, page 104.*

Fredric Dannen on The People *v.* The People *v.* John Gotti, *page 26.*

Ann Louise Bardach on NPR's Nina Totenberg, the woman who brought you the Anita Hill leak, page 46.

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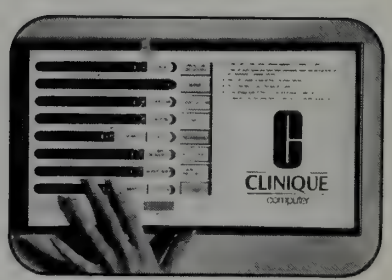

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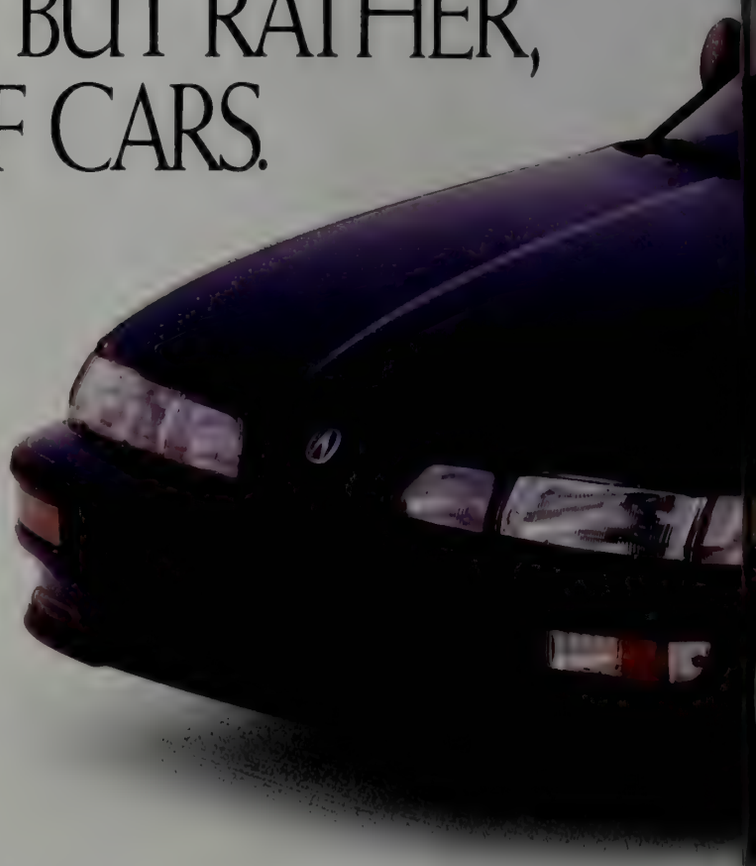

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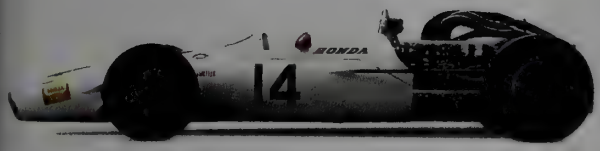

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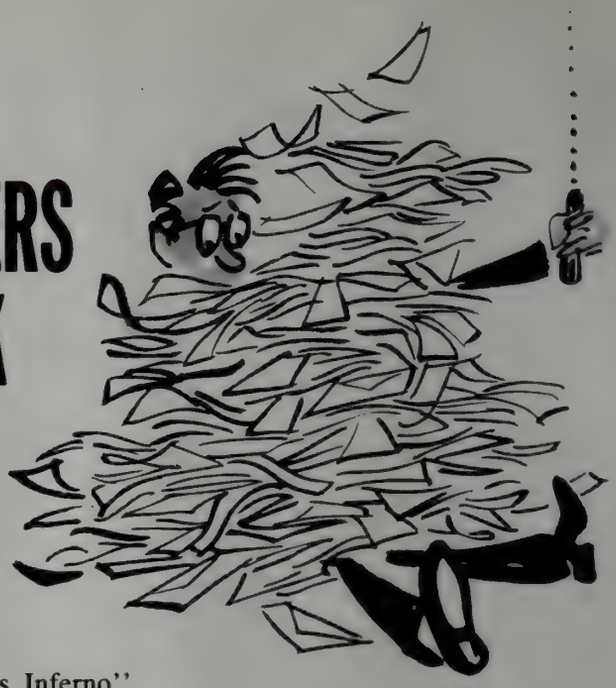


Death Trap

Brian Masters's "Dahmer's Inferno" [November] was objective and well written, and I agree that all "unnatural" human behavior should be examined in order to understand its origins. What, however, is the significance of this knowledge if it does not affect the people who create the "dysfunctional environments" which are notorious for producing the types of "outcasts" who commit these crimes? I have yet to read of a case in which a parent realized, "I believe I am psychologically damaging my child. I had better consult a psychology journal and discover how to prevent him/her from becoming another me." I'm sure the accumulated knowledge of these sorts of crimes is beneficial to legal and medical examiners trying to decide to what sector of society the outcasts should be directed once they are caught. But by the time this occurs, these people have already abused or murdered someone. Therefore, the knowledge appears to be more beneficial in determining the future of the criminal than in preventing his/her creation.

TONY STRADER
Altamonte Springs, Florida

Two months before Jeffrey Dahmer was arrested, police were called to his apartment to investigate a disturbance which Dahmer allegedly described to them as a gay domestic squabble. In the few minutes the police were there, they observed nothing alarming, so no arrests were made. In the following months, Dahmer killed his "lover" and several other men. The Milwaukee chief of police fired the two officers. Dahmer's attorney, Gerald Boyle, has known Dahmer since 1988, during which period Dahmer murdered numerous people. Surely, in his close association with Dahmer, he must have suspected that Dahmer had this dark side. Yet two policemen who were in contact with Dahmer for only a few minutes lost their jobs. Where is the justice here?

PAUL RATHJEN
Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin

Disneyland

Regarding Peter J. Boyer's "Katzenberg's Seven-Year Itch" [November]: How presumptuous to write an obit on Jeffrey Katzenberg's career. This man will inarguably have more of a future than the vast majority of his detractors.

BARRY M. GREENBERG
Marina del Rey, California

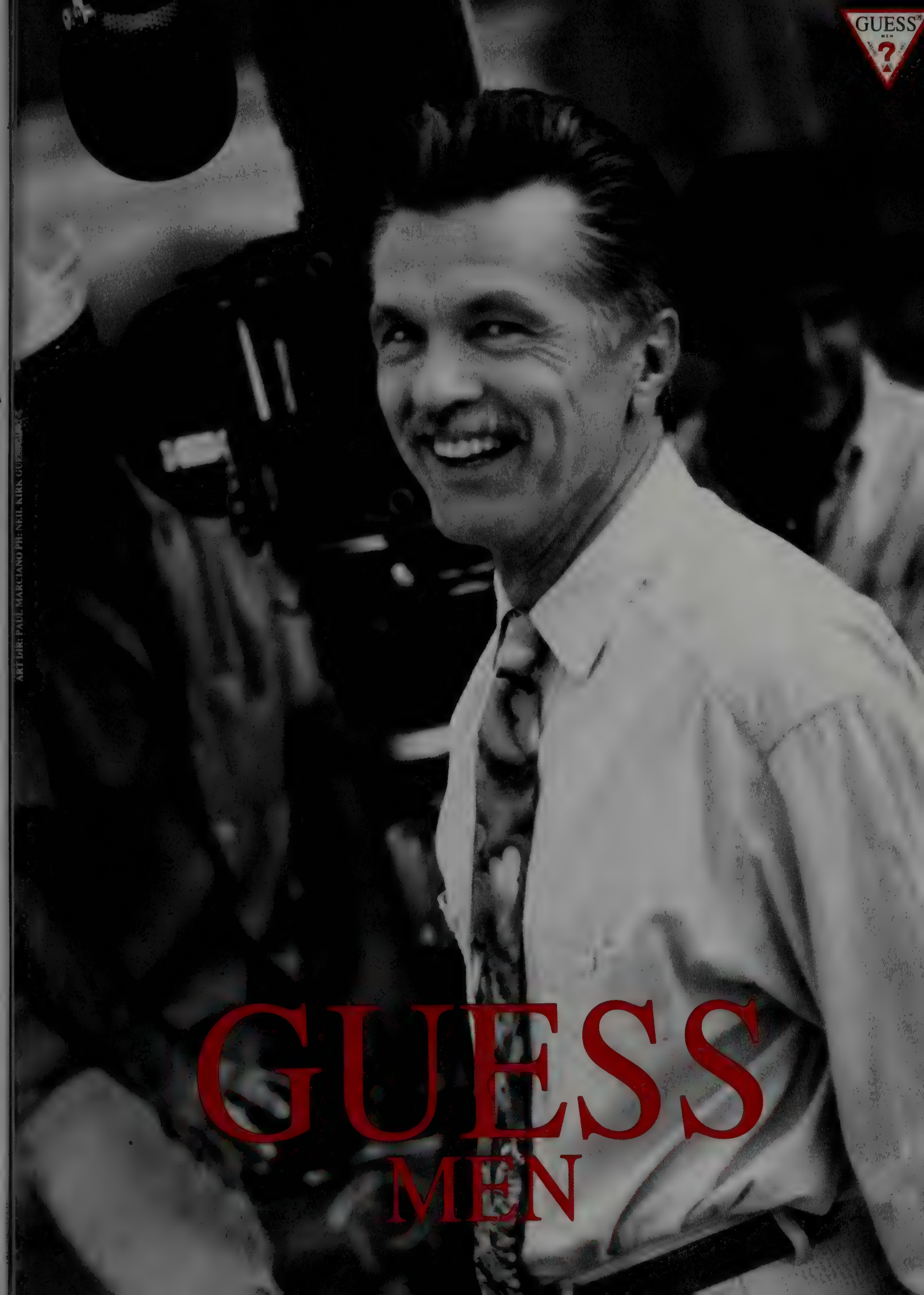
I read the article on Disney on a plane coming home from visiting *Billy Bathgate* in postproduction.

It needs to be said that at least from where I was standing Disney was impeccable. We taxed the company's nerves, schedules, patience, and pocketbook, and received in return unstinted good-humored support.

Interference? Plenty, if that's what you want to call it. They throw ideas at you from first draft to final cut. The way to deal with this is to use the ones you like and ignore the ones you don't. So, as we say in England, come off it! You get what you give, and what we got, as far as I was concerned, was the whole damn company getting behind the movie and pushing. I liked it.

TOM STOPPARD
London, England

TIM SHEAFFER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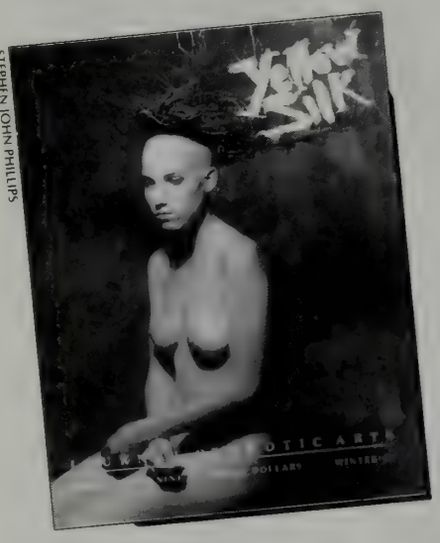

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If You Knew Susan

After reading Maureen Orth's "Educating Susan" [November], I see nothing wrong with how Susan Gutfreund chooses to live her life. Why is it so awful to want to surround yourself and those around you with beautiful things? I am a senior in the Fashion Design Department at Massachusetts College of Art in Boston, and this year I am dedicating my senior fashion collection to Susan Gutfreund, whose grand personal style has inspired my designs.

SEAN D. KREBS
Boston, Massachusetts

Susan Kaposta Gutfreund did indeed attend a convent school, as she alleges. St. Vincent Convent's name had been changed to St. Vincent's Academy by the time Susan was there (1959–63), but she did attend this Shreveport, Louisiana, convent school before going to Louisiana State University. I was a class ahead of her. How cold and cynical Susan's critics seem to be. Could it be because she was unknown and from the awful South that people are so quick to judge?

NINA S. BROYLES
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Loony Koons

I agree with Anthony Haden-Guest in his affirmation of Jeff Koons's sincerity ["Art or Commerce?" November]. How could Koons's candid and unreserved ability to permeate mass consciousness ever be labeled fraud or desecration of art? Recently, I had the pleasure of seeing one of his works in a Dallas shopping mall, in a kiosk area between the Gap and McDonald's. What an utterly fitting venue for his message.

JENNIFER YEARGAIN FISHER
Houston, Texas

I was somewhat taken aback by your article on the notorious Mr. Koons. I felt that Art Rogers's work was trivialized most improperly in the piece. He has created a unique style of photography, which has received widespread critical acclaim. I have known Art Rogers for some time. While Haden-Guest is clearly entitled to his opinion, a meaningful criticism of Rogers's work should indicate that the photo in question is one of his early works exhibited at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and that Rogers is a Guggenheim fellow. Haden-Guest makes it appear that Koons has given artistic expression to some insignificant found image, rather than to another man's previously recognized artwork. I believe that the courts got it right. Their opinion for summary judgment is a model of judicial clarity. Their work was made easier by the fact that Koons tore off the portion of the licensed reproduction containing the copyright information and urged his hired sculptors to make their image "just like the photo."

JOHN HULLS
Point Reyes, California

Good Ol' Boy

I read with great interest Ron Rosenbaum's "The Ballad of Willie Nelson" [November]. Despite his current financial woes, Willie recently created and donated a song for the musical *Monsters!* at the Real Children's Theatre of Texas, of which I am the artistic director. The song, "We're All a Blur, Under Our Fur," carried the important message that "there's no difference between me and you." Next summer we will perform *Monsters!* at the Children's Theatre of Leningrad/St. Petersburg with a combined cast of young people from Texas and Russia. Willie's song will be translated into Russian in order that its powerful message will spread to the children of the world.

DEDE CLARK
Austin, Texas

Equal Sheridan

Thank you for James Wolcott's spotlight of Nicollette Sheridan ["Fair Sheridan," November]. I wish Harry Hamlin and Nicollette the best of luck. My brother, guitarist John Michael Hanson, went to prep school with Harry. Look at him now!

PAUL J. HANSON
San Gabriel, California

Wolcott in his piece on Nicollette Sheridan refers to her "shelf life," "blank hedonism," "numb minimalism," and her recent marriage to "sperm bank" Harry Hamlin. This seems like small-time, sophomoric name-calling.

MICHELLE PHILLIPS
GEOFFREY TOZER
Los Angeles, California

Letters to the editor should be sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to: The Editor, Vanity Fair, 350 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10017. The letters chosen for publication may be edited for length and clarity.

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LANCÔME
PARIS

THE UNTOUCHABLE?

How the F.B.I. sabotaged competing prosecution teams in the race to nail alleged Mob king John Gotti

BY FREDRIC DANNEN

"My God, you people work just like the Mob! There's no difference!" Michelle Pfeiffer exclaims to a federal agent in *Married to the Mob*.

An extreme viewpoint, perhaps. Yet there is at least one similarity between the Mob and the justice system: both are subject to nasty territorial disputes. With five Mafia families in New York alone, the competition for business can be fierce; there are only so many pension funds to loot or building contractors to shake down. The government has a similar problem—too many overlapping jurisdictions and just not enough celebrity criminals to go around.

Nowhere has the competition among crime busters been more apparent than in the long campaign to convict alleged Mafia boss John Gotti. Maybe it's because Gotti has captured the public's imagination like no underworld figure since Al Capone. But ever since Gotti rose to power in the mid-eighties, prosecutors and investigators, both state and federal, have been feuding over who gets to put him away.

Though reported in the media only sporadically, this infighting has benefited Gotti immeasurably. Twice he has beaten racketeering indictments, and a case can be made that a lack of cooperation within the government contributed both times to the failure to convict.

In 1987 and 1990, prosecutors were unable to convince juries of what the press and public have long since concluded: that Gotti is the head of the Gambino crime family and not, as he insists, a salesman for the Arc Plumbing and Heating Corporation. The two acquittals have given Gotti a mantle of invincibility and added to his already inflated legend. Each time he gets off, it becomes more difficult to win a conviction, because of an unspoken "fear factor" in the jury pool—the fear that Gotti is more powerful than the government.

On January 20, jury selection is scheduled to begin in "Gotti III," a murder-and-racketeering case against the Mob boss. (Technically, it's Gotti IV, if you count the assault case brought against him in 1986 for roughing up a man and stealing his money in a dispute over a double-parked car. When the victim learned the identity of his attacker, he suffered amnesia and the case was dropped for lack of evidence. An immortal *New York Post* headline said it all: I FORGOTTI!)

Gotti III was originally scheduled to begin last September, but in a surprise ruling, Judge I. Leo Glasser disqualified Gotti's longtime defense lawyer, Bruce Cutler, citing a conflict of interest: Cutler's voice turns up on wiretapped conversations the government plans to play in court. Gotti has since retained Albert Krieger, a well-regarded Miami-based criminal lawyer who once represented Mob boss Joseph Bonanno.

The stakes are now uncomfortably high. "This is *it*," says one prosecutor watching from the sidelines. Supposedly, Gotti III is the strongest case to be mounted against the reputed crime boss. In a stunning setback for Gotti, Salvatore Gravano, his alleged underboss, has become a government witness. But perhaps even more significant, the case features a crucial element missing from Gottis I and II: the full participation of the F.B.I. The bureau, which appears obsessed with hogging credit for a Gotti conviction, deliberately withheld support and information from prosecutors in the first two cases. The F.B.I.'s conduct in the Gotti matter has contributed to a widely held view that, in the words of one former prosecutor, "they are more concerned with the aggrandizement of the F.B.I. than in seeing justice done." Indeed, the F.B.I.'s colossal arrogance is the most persistent theme in the story of the political infighting over Gotti. (The many high-level sources interviewed for this article declined to be quoted by name. The F.B.I. was given a list of accusations and declined to comment on them.)

"The F.B.I.'s behavior verges on criminal," says a member of one of the prosecution teams that made an unsuccessful case against Gotti. "I inter-

Iron John: Gotti, center, during his 1990 trial, with, from left, lawyers Gerald Shargel and Bruce Cutler, and his brother Peter Gotti.

GREG MILLER

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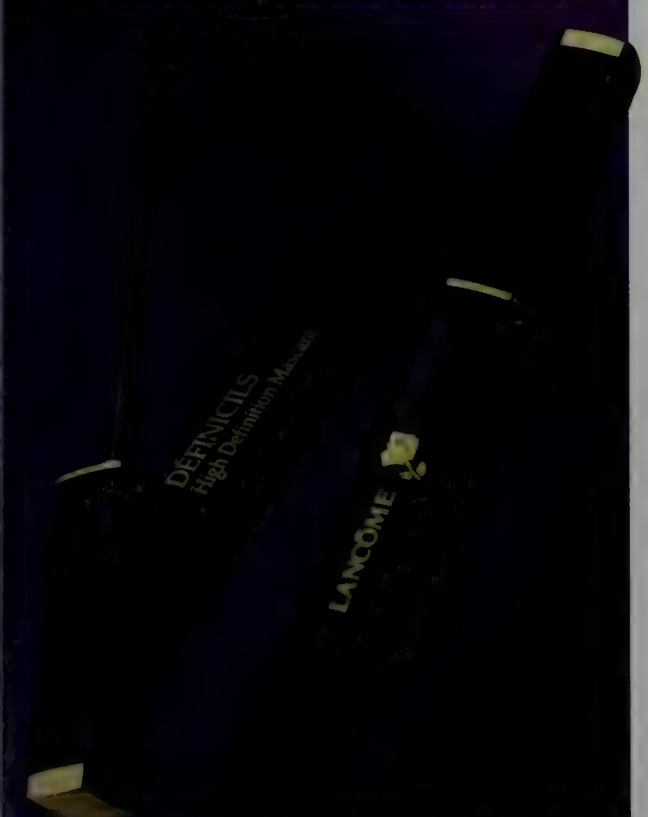

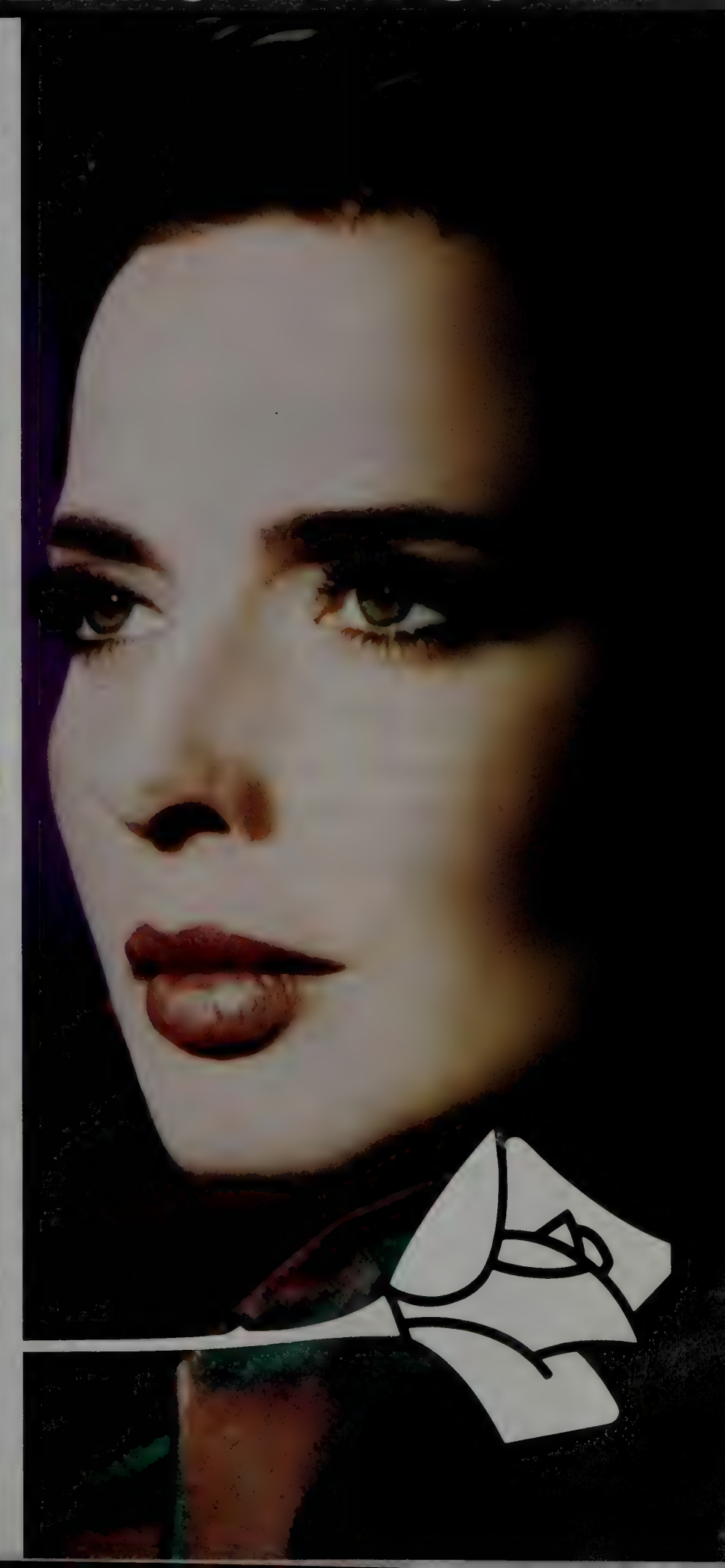

LANCÔME
PARIS

viewed witnesses who said the F.B.I. told them not to talk to me—that's unbelievable. . . . I don't trust them. I've got to tell you, no prosecutor does."

The grab for Gotti has its origins in events that took place when he was said to be a mere underling in the Gambino Mob, a small blip on the government's radar screen. Already, the government turf war was raging. Both Brooklyn and Manhattan were home to two federal prosecutorial agencies, a U.S. Attorney's Office and an organized-crime strike force. To complicate matters, in Brooklyn these two agencies were until recently under separate command and therefore in competition.

From the late seventies until 1982 the Brooklyn strike force was run by Thomas Puccio, who seemed relatively uninterested in organized crime, the very evil his agency had been set up to combat. Instead, Puccio devoted nearly half his agency's resources to ABSCAM, a sting operation in which federal agents posed as wealthy Arab businessmen and bribed public officials. Puccio won enormous publicity—and caused deep resentment at the Brooklyn U.S. Attorney's Office. Public-corruption cases, after all, were not supposed to be the strike force's bailiwick.

"The F.B.I.'s behavior verges on criminal," says a member of one of the prosecution teams that made an unsuccessful case against Gotti.

In 1982, Puccio was succeeded by Edward McDonald, a charismatic former college basketball star who had nailed New Jersey senator Harrison Williams in the ABSCAM case. Like a new managing partner at a law firm, McDonald needed to drum up business. His goal was to return the strike force to its organized-crime roots.

Around this time, both the F.B.I. and prosecutors began to discover two powerful tools in the war against organized crime. The first was sophisticated wiretap surveillance. The second was the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations, or RICO, statute, which had been passed by Congress in 1970, yet largely neglected for a decade. RICO enabled a prosecutor to assemble a list of even petty crimes—bookmaking, say, or shylocking—and link them as "predicate acts" in a "continuing criminal enterprise." A conviction under RICO could mean a twenty-year sentence or more.

For the time being, the Brooklyn U.S. Attorney's Office, under its new head man, Raymond Dearie, did not appear very interested in the Mafia. McDonald faced competition, however, from Rudolph Giuliani, the new, politically ambitious U.S. attorney in Manhattan. In 1983, McDonald planned to mount a sweeping case against the leaders of the Colombo crime family, which seemed well within his jurisdiction—it was, after all, known as "the Brooklyn family." But Giuliani had high-level connections in Washington, having been an associate attorney general under William French Smith. He took the matter directly to Smith and walked off with the Colombo case.

Having lost that skirmish, McDonald turned his attention more intently to the Gambino family, in which John Gotti, it was believed, was a captain with a crew of soldiers. Never the criminal mastermind he has been made out to be, Gotti had allegedly risen up the ranks chiefly by hijacking trucks and performing requisite acts of violence. In 1973, for example, Gotti and two Gambino associates, Angelo Ruggiero and Ralph "Ralphie Wigs" Galione, were called upon to settle a score. James McBratney, a small-time hood, was thought to be responsible for the kidnapping and murder of one of Carlo Gambino's nephews. Gotti and his two associates tracked McBratney to a Staten Island bar and attempted to abduct him. When McBratney resisted, Galione shot him dead. Galione was mysteriously killed before he could stand trial. Gotti and Ruggiero pleaded guilty to attempted manslaughter in 1975 and served two years apiece. Gotti has never since been convicted of a crime.

McDonald was not alone in targeting the Gambino family. The F.B.I. had long been interested as well and back in 1981 had bugged Ruggiero's home on Long Island, acting on a court order obtained by the Brooklyn strike force. The F.B.I. had divided its organized-crime section into "desks," or groups of agents concentrating on a specific Mafia organization, and the Gambino desk, with about sixteen agents on average, was the largest. A few years later, again through McDonald's office, the F.B.I. tapped the home of Aniello Dellacroce (the name means "little lamb of the Cross"), a diminutive, vicious man who prosecutors believe was John Gotti's mentor.

The most important Gambino wiretap supervised by the Brooklyn strike force, however, was the one placed in the supposedly impenetrable home of the family boss at the time, Paul Castellano. (The Castellano bugging is the subject of the recent best-seller *Boss of Bosses*, written by two F.B.I. agents from the Gambino desk.) It was a remarkably productive bug, and McDonald believed he had the makings of a solid RICO case against the Gambino don and several of the family's top members.

But in February 1984, McDonald found himself upstaged once again by Giuliani's office. This time, McDonald's rival was Walter Mack, head of the Manhattan organized-crime strike force, who suddenly had Castellano arrested. For years, Mack had been working on the DeMeo case, one of the longest organized-crime trials in the history of the United States. Roy DeMeo was a Gambino captain who, apart from having had an estimated thirty-seven people killed, ran a luxury-car-theft ring. Mack chose to include Castellano in this case, accusing him of profiting from the stolen-car scam and of having knowledge that DeMeo and his crew had committed all the murders.

Walter Mack was no one to trifle with. A large, stentorian-voiced man with an imposing presence in the courtroom, he was gaining a reputation as one of the nation's top organized-crime prosecutors. His boss, Giuliani, was said to be fearful of Mack, and the two men clashed over what one prosecutor describes as "Rudy's press parade." Giuliani would call a press conference at the least provocation; Mack believed it was appropriate to give an interview only after a conviction.

Mack's impressive reputation did not appease McDonald's people, however. To them, Castellano's connection to the DeMeo murder gang was sketchy at best; it was "a shitty case," insists one Brooklyn-strike-force alumnus. Within the F.B.I., however, where Walter Mack was held in high regard, opinion over his case was sharply divided.

GIANNI
VERSACE
SIGNATURE
NEW YORK BEVERLY HILLS SAN FRANCISCO WASHINGTON HOUSTON CHICAGO BAL HARBOUR HONOLULU VANCOUVER TORONTO
PH. CAGGI

As it turned out, neither Mack nor McDonald would get to prosecute Castellano; the don did not have much longer to live. And the battle for Castellano would soon give way to an even fiercer dispute over his successor.

At the moment, however, John Gotti was allegedly still a mere captain. In that role he had fallen under the scrutiny of an assistant U.S. attorney in Brooklyn named Diane Giacalone, who had become something of an expert in truck-hijacking cases, which happened to be Gotti's specialty. In 1983, Giacalone convened a grand jury to explore Mob-related truck heists. A workaholic who was, by general consensus, somewhat difficult and suspicious, Giacalone had grown up and gone to Catholic school in Ozone Park, Queens, the heart of John Gotti territory.

Giacalone's grand-jury probe had been active only a short time when she got a big break. Brooklyn homicide cops had custody of a hood named James Cardinali, who had just been nabbed and faced a life sentence on a murder charge, unless he could cut a deal, which was exactly what he had in mind. Cardinali had something to offer: in 1976, while serving time for robbery, he had befriended John Gotti and Angelo Ruggiero, in jail for the barroom shooting of James McBratney. After his release in 1979, Cardinali had shown up at Gotti's favorite hangout in Ozone Park—the Bergin Hunt and Fish Club—and successfully begged for a job (he was allowed to sweep the floor, among other duties). Now Cardinali wanted entrée to the Federal Witness Protection Program, and therefore needed a federal attorney to "sponsor" him.

The Brooklyn D.A.'s office called McDonald's strike force, but for some reason there was no response. Finally, late on Friday afternoon that week, the D.A.'s office tried Giacalone, who worked in the same building as McDonald, the federal courthouse in Brooklyn Heights. Giacalone was still there, though most of her colleagues had already gone home for the weekend.

Giacalone immediately put Cardinali in the witness program. Cardinali, she believed, could link individual crimes by members of the Gambino family into a pattern of racketeering. Giacalone's truck-heist investigation was soon a Gambino-family RICO case with ten suspects. Her lead target was underboss Aniello Dellacroce. The number-two suspect—a distant second—was John Gotti, whom Giacalone still regarded as a "two-bit hood."

Never the criminal mastermind he has been made out to be, Gotti had allegedly risen up the ranks hijacking trucks and performing acts of violence.

If the F.B.I. and the Brooklyn strike force had been annoyed over Walter Mack's incursion into their territory, they were apoplectic over Giacalone's. Why did she persist with the folly of making her own Gambino RICO case? The F.B.I. and the strike force had secret informants and wiretaps; she had none. True, she had Jimmy Cardinali—and, to the F.B.I.'s despair, she could not be forced to turn him over. When a federal lawyer sponsors a witness, that person becomes, effectively, the attorney's property ("a lump of meat," in the words of one former prosecutor). "Cardinali gave her real predicate crimes," says a former member of the Brooklyn strike force. "Had he found his way into the proper place—in my opinion, the proper place being the strike force—he would have been used by the bureau and by us."

Though the F.B.I. is theoretically a branch of the Justice Department, in practice it is often powerful enough to go "forum shopping"—to decide which office will get to try a case. The forum it wanted for the prosecution of Dellacroce and Gotti was the Brooklyn strike force. "The F.B.I. views prosecutors as hired lawyers who do what it tells them to do," complains one government attorney. Giacalone, meanwhile, had done the unthinkable: she was assembling her Gambino case with New York City police detectives, D.E.A. agents, and postal inspectors. The F.B.I. disdains working with other investigative agencies.

One incident dramatically underscored the ill will between Giacalone and the bureau. At one point in her investigation, Giacalone sharply criticized the F.B.I. for mishandling, in her view, the investigation of a fugitive witness. The agent responsible appeared in Giacalone's office to discuss the matter. According to an eyewitness, the agent told her, "If you were a man, I'd hit you in the face." "Don't let that stop you," Giacalone replied, standing up. "Take your best shot."

There was another, deeper reason why Giacalone and the F.B.I. could not work together. At another point in her investigation, she learned of a supposed contract on the life of an F.B.I. agent. Giacalone did not believe this information was reliable enough to warrant alerting the bureau, and she was probably right: the contract was years old and her informant was a notorious con artist. Nonetheless, an enraged F.B.I. attempted to have her fired for this omission. "They wrote to [F.B.I.

Law and disorder: *Clockwise from below,* Diane Giacalone; James Fox, Robert Morgenthau, Andrew Maloney; Edward McDonald.

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NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Director William] Webster," says one former federal prosecutor. "If you want to get the attorney general to dump somebody, you go to the chief of the F.B.I. It didn't work—but it certainly drew the lines."

The Brooklyn strike force was equally hostile. In a highly unusual move, Ed McDonald wrote a memo to the Justice Department, laying out reasons why Giacalone's case was likely to fail. ("It was a prophetic memo; Ed helped make it prophetic," a member of Giacalone's team says ruefully.) McDonald argued that Giacalone's pending indictment should be folded into his own, bigger Gambino case, in which Paul Castellano was to be the lead defendant.

McDonald found a sympathetic ear in Paul Coffey, deputy chief of the Justice Department's Organized Crime and Racketeering Section. Unfortunately, as McDonald was to discover, there is no mechanism in Washington to resolve these types of disputes, unless the attorney general intervenes—and only Rudy Giuliani appeared capable of pulling those strings. So the word came back from Washington that the decision would rest with Giacalone's boss, Brooklyn U.S. attorney Raymond Dearie.

The F.B.I. agent told Giacalone, "If you were a man, I'd hit you in the face." "Don't let that stop you," she replied. "Take your best shot."

Dearie was not about to meet McDonald's request. For starters, Dearie's wife, Susan Shepard, was Giacalone's immediate supervisor and her staunch ally. Moreover, Giacalone had a powerful argument in her favor—she had sacrificed her personal life for several years, working on her case almost around the clock (government lawyers, borrowing a term from business, call this a "sweat equity" claim). There was, perhaps, one final, unspoken reason why Dearie would not give up the case. His office had not overcome its resentment caused by the strike force's ABSCAM investigation. Now it was payback time. "Ray felt, You got out of the organized-crime business for a long time, and now you want to come back and skim the cream? That won't work," recalls one of Dearie's former colleagues. (Dearie declined to be interviewed for this article.)

But the pressure from McDonald and the F.B.I. was strong enough that a compromise was struck: Giacalone and her team of non-F.B.I. investigators were not permitted to look into any ongoing activity inside the Gambino family. "We could do historical digging, but nothing that might jeopardize the F.B.I.'s active investigation," recalls a member of Giacalone's team. Giacalone's supporters would look back on this odd agreement as one of the factors that helped doom her case.

To make matters worse for Giacalone, neither the bureau nor the Brooklyn strike force seemed willing to share any information. "They told [Giacalone] to pound sand," says an insider. Her assistant counsel John Gleeson was denied the Ruggiero tapes on the grounds that he was a "security risk," despite the fact that the tapes had already been turned over, as required by law, to Ruggiero's lawyers. And although Aniello Dellacroce was her lead target, neither the F.B.I. nor the strike force saw fit to tell Giacalone that the bureau was bugging his house. The secrecy reached almost comic proportions in June 1985, when a bail hearing was held at the home of Dellacroce, who was too ill to leave his bed. The F.B.I. and the strike force had to shut down their bug during the hearing to avoid secretly taping not only Giacalone but federal judge Eugene Nickerson. It was not until the following year, soon before her trial began—and after Dellacroce died of cancer—that Giacalone finally obtained copies of the Dellacroce tapes.

Had it been up to the bureau, she probably would never have gotten the tapes at all. The Brooklyn strike force ultimately turned them over with the utmost reluctance. "Our biggest client was the F.B.I., and the F.B.I. decided Diane shouldn't be making her case or even be an assistant U.S. attorney," a strike-force alumnus explains today. "So no one in our department did anything to help Diane. We served our biggest client."

"The F.B.I. absolutely, positively fucked Diane Giacalone," concludes a state prosecutor who watched the debacle unfold. "Her position was, the bureau had crucial information for her case, but because it wasn't an 'F.B.I. case'—it was put together by police detectives and other officers—they decided, out of pique, that they were not going to help."

Soon the already terrible relations between Giacalone and the F.B.I. escalated into thermonuclear war. Over the bureau's protestations, Giacalone's indictment included a longtime Gambino associate named Wilfred "Willie Boy" Johnson. As Giacalone was already aware—no thanks to the bureau—Willie Boy had been a secret F.B.I. informant since the mid-sixties. Only half Italian (his father was American Indian), Willie Boy was disqualified from formal induction into the Mob. But as an enforcer, he had been witness to the most detailed inner workings of the Gambino family, and few people were closer to John Gotti than he. Often, the bureau has been able to dissuade government lawyers from indicting its top-echelon informants—a classic case is the late Teamsters president Jackie Presser, who snitched for the F.B.I. for years while appearing uncannily immune to prosecution.

Having indicted Willie Boy, Giacalone then insisted it was necessary to reveal his informant status, much to the F.B.I.'s horror. Defense counsel, she said, was entitled to raise as a possible defense the issue of whether Willie Boy was a conspirator or an agent provocateur. (In other words, did Willie Boy, acting for the F.B.I., induce other defendants to break the law?) F.B.I. agents believe that Giacalone chose to indict Willie Boy in hopes he would be forced to join the Federal Witness Protection Program and testify in court for her. (She has denied this.)

Giacalone had her first meeting with Willie Boy on the morning of March 28, 1985. When asked at a hearing later that day if Johnson had expressed concerns for his safety, she replied, "Yes. He said that he and his family would be slaughtered if his identity were revealed." She added that she had explained to Willie Boy that blowing his cover "was a legal issue that we had resolved reluctantly in this way," and that "we were prepared to protect him" if he wished to join the witness program. Willie Boy ultimately declined the offer of protection, and also refused to testify. On August 29, 1988,

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a year and a half after he and Gotti were tried and acquitted, Willie Boy was ambushed by four gunmen outside his home and killed. "Well," Gotti told reporters a few hours later, "we all gotta go sometime."

F.B.I. agents are still deeply embittered over the fate of Willie Boy Johnson. "Why did she indict him when she knew full well she would have to disclose [his informant status], which is the same as a death sentence as far as we're concerned?" one recently retired agent says. (Giacalone is said to have expressed little remorse over Willie Boy's death, on the grounds that it is never surprising when a drug dealer—one of his vocations—is shot.) In papers prepared by prosecutors, Gotti has been accused, though not formally charged, with plotting Willie Boy's murder; reputed mobster Thomas "Tommy Karate" Pitera has been indicted for the killing.

Perhaps it is true that Willie Boy would not have agreed to testify under any circumstances. But Giacalone never even had the chance to call another top-level F.B.I. informant, because he inexplicably vanished. His name was William Battista, and he was, like Gotti, a veteran truck hijacker for the Gambino Mob. Around the time that Giacalone filed her indictment, Battista was being kept in a safe house in Pennsylvania by the F.B.I. Then he mysteriously disappeared. "My theory," says a lawyer for one of the defendants in Gotti I, "is that the F.B.I. let him disappear so that he would not be utilized by Giacalone. I think they sabotaged her case. The F.B.I. really stood in her way and fought her. They wouldn't have just left Battista alone, unguarded, and then gone back there and said, 'Oh my God! He's gone!' "

Nine months after the Giacalone indictment was handed down, two events occurred in quick succession that dramatically raised the stakes for all concerned. On December 2, 1988, Aniello Dellacroce died of cancer, leaving John Gotti as the lead defendant in the case, which still had not come to trial. More significant, Dellacroce, according to prosecutors, had been Gotti's main protection from an angry Paul Castellano. The Gambino boss had recently learned that reputed members of Gotti's crew had been dealing heroin, a serious offense, according to family rules. In the two weeks following Dellacroce's death, Castellano made his unpopular chauffeur, Thomas Bilotti, his new underboss, and threatened to break up Gotti's crew. Then, on December 16, Castellano and Bilotti were gunned down in front of Sparks Steak House, on East Forty-sixth Street in Manhattan. (Gotti, who seemed to quickly take over Castellano's job, has been charged in Gotti III, the pending case, with ordering the murder.)

The clash between Ed McDonald's Brooklyn strike force and Walter Mack's Manhattan strike force over Paul Castellano was suddenly a moot issue. Now neither of them had the alleged head of the Gambino family under indictment; Diane Giacalone did.

Although Aniello Dellacroce was Giacalone's lead target, neither the F.B.I. nor the strike force told her the bureau was bugging his house.

But because Giacalone had been boxed into making a strictly historical case, all of the racketeering acts she alleged against Gotti were old, if not hoary. Along with charges of gambling, loan-sharking, and transporting stolen goods across state lines, she alleged as a RICO predicate the 1973 killing of James McBratney. (Under RICO, even old crimes for which one has been convicted can be reintroduced to demonstrate a *pattern* of criminal behavior.) Giacalone would now have to prove that McBratney was slain in furtherance of the goals of the Gambino family—no small chore.

Despite the lack of cooperation from the bureau, Giacalone did not walk into court unarmed. In addition to James Cardinali, the witness she had sponsored, the State Organized Crime Task Force had handed over to her its top Gambino informant, Dominick Lofaro.

Unfortunately, Giacalone was hardly prepared for the mauling she would receive at the hands of Bruce Cutler, Gotti's defense attorney. A former wrestler with a brutal cross-examination style, Cutler has been likened more to a Mob *consigliere* than a mere criminal lawyer—a characterization given some weight in Judge Glasser's decision to exclude him from participation in Gotti III.

The federal judge who presided over Gotti I, Eugene Nickerson, also appeared unprepared for Cutler's theatrics, which commenced on the day of opening arguments, when the lawyer slam-dunked a copy of the indictment into a wastebasket and made sneering references to "the lady in red" (Giacalone had shown up in a scarlet power suit). Nickerson did surprisingly little to rein in Cutler.

While cross-examining James Cardinali, Cutler gleefully brought out disparaging remarks the government witness had once made about Giacalone.

"She's no longer the same individual you described in May of 1986, is that correct?" Cutler asked.

"That's correct," Cardinali said.

"In other words, she's no longer a slut, is that right? In your mind?"

"Correct."

"She's no longer a blow job in your mind?"

"Correct. . ."

"She's no longer a liar, isn't that right?. . ."

One member of the Brooklyn strike force, witnessing Cutler's outrageous courtroom tactics—a process the tabloids dubbed "Brucification"—believed the defense lawyer was irritating the jury and would surely blow the case. But juries are unpredictable, and when the verdicts were in, all the defendants were acquitted on all the charges. In the end, Giacalone apparently had insufficient evidence to prove a racketeering conspiracy.

News of the acquittals reached the Brooklyn strike force within minutes. "I had, for an instant, a real feeling of schadenfreude," a former member of the strike force admits, using the German word that means joy derived from another person's woes. "I stood up and looked out the window, and within two seconds, guys were screaming, 'John's free!' 'Motherfucker!' Cars were beeping their horns. Then that sense of schadenfreude left, and all I felt was disgust that he'd been acquitted—although I can't say I was sorry Diane Giacalone suffered personal misfortune."

The F.B.I.'s schadenfreude appears to have lasted a bit longer, much to the dismay of one disinterested prosecutor: "I remember as a very young

kid watching the Vanguard rocket—it crashed and burned, a national catastrophe. But Wernher von Braun, who had the Jupiter C project, popped open the champagne. Likewise, the F.B.I. was pleased as punch that the prosecution of John Gotti was not successful. I've been told they celebrated—went out for drinks and toasted their luck."

No sooner did Giacalone's loss start to sink in than the grab for Gotti began anew. Giacalone's boss, Brooklyn U.S. attorney Ray Dearie, had by this time quit to become a federal judge, and after an interim replacement the job went to Andrew Maloney. An affable West Point graduate, Maloney was not, by his own admission, a great legal scholar, and his memory was notoriously spotty. "He can tell you details of the prosecution of Charlie Bentnose in 1962," laughs a former colleague, "but ask him about the biggest case in his office today and he won't know the name of the assistant handling it."

"The F.B.I. was pleased as punch that the prosecution was not successful. I've been told they celebrated—went out for drinks and toasted their luck."

Though Maloney was not directly associated with Gotti I, the case had been lost by his office, and he must have been itching for a rematch. That presumably went double for the far more learned attorney who worked under him, John Gleeson, who had assisted Giacalone in her case. He had taken considerable abuse not only from Gotti's defense team but also from Giacalone herself; it was well known that he had grown to dislike her, and as a result, he won the esteem of the F.B.I. ("John's a wonderful guy," says a recent veteran of the bureau).

Both Maloney and Gleeson were said to be fearful that if Rudy Giuliani took charge of the next Gotti case and won he could, in the words of one amused observer, take Maloney and Gleeson and "rub their noses in the dirt." Historically, there has always been tension and distrust between the U.S. attorneys for Manhattan and Brooklyn. That Giuliani was a notorious headline grabber only made matters worse.

Maloney had another thorn in his side: Ed McDonald and the Brooklyn strike force. Over Maloney's strenuous objections, McDonald once again steered his office into the public-corruption area by prosecuting and convicting two corrupt New York City politicos, Meade Esposito and Mario Biaggi.

But soon after that, Maloney was rid of both Giuliani and McDonald. Giuliani resigned as Manhattan U.S. attorney to mount an unsuccessful bid for New York City mayor. Then the new attorney general, Dick Thornburgh, decided to dissolve all the nation's independent strike forces and merge them into their respective U.S. Attorney's Offices. McDonald quit in June 1989 to become a defense attorney at a New York law firm. Of the fourteen people on his strike-force staff, only one stayed behind to report to Andy Maloney.

One of the final acts of the Brooklyn strike force was to win court approval for the F.B.I. to rebug the Ravenite Social Club in Manhattan's Little Italy, a favorite Gambino hangout. The bureau's previous wiretaps at the club had produced inaudible tapes, but now they were placed in different locations, to excellent effect. It looked as though the next Gotti case would be a winner. But who would get it: the U.S. attorney for Manhattan or Brooklyn?

Neither, as it turned out. The Manhattan D.A.'s office, under veteran prosecutor Robert Morgenthau, had just made a successful case against the Westies, a violent Irish gang in New York with a penchant for murder and dismemberment. In the course of developing the case, the D.A. became aware that the Gambino family occasionally used the Westies as enforcers. For example, John Gotti had allegedly asked the Westies to shoot carpenters' union boss John O'Connor, in retaliation for the February 1986 vandalization of Bankers & Brokers, a Gambino-owned restaurant. Supposedly, O'Connor had ordered the restaurant smashed up because it had been built with non-union labor. O'Connor was shot and wounded in May 1986; Gotti allegedly congratulated Westies boss James Coonan for "a job well done."

Michael Cherkasky, a special assistant D.A. in Morgenthau's office with a 40-and-1 felony-trial record, believed he had a strong assault case against Gotti and another reputed Gambino member, Anthony "Tony Lee" Guerrieri. (Angelo Ruggiero, a third suspect, died before trial.) Secret tape recordings made by the State Organized Crime Task Force next door to a Gotti hangout in Queens appeared to corroborate the D.A.'s theory of the O'Connor shooting. Plus, a Westies member imprisoned at Rikers Island had taped conversations with fellow Westies inmates on behalf of the D.A.'s office. Finally, Cherkasky had a witness who could connect Gotti with the Irish gang: James McElroy, a Westie serving ten to sixty years on a 1988 federal racketeering conviction. In January 1989, the Manhattan D.A.'s office indicted John Gotti and Tony Lee Guerrieri in Gotti II, also known as "the carpenters' case."

Cherkasky had always had a good relationship with the F.B.I. It did not immediately occur to him that the bureau might resent seeing another non-F.B.I. case being brought against Gotti. And in public, at least, the bureau appeared supportive. At the press conference announcing the indictment, James Fox, the director of the New York office of the F.B.I., sat to the left of D.A. Bob Morgenthau. And, privately, Cherkasky received encouragement from another top F.B.I. official, Jules Bonavolonta, head of the New York bureau's organized-crime section.

But the F.B.I.'s resentment quickly became apparent to the State Organized Crime Task Force, which was working closely with Cherkasky on the carpenters' case. "At a party," says a knowledgeable source, "a couple of F.B.I. people told some of [the task force] people—I guess they'd had too much to drink—that they hoped the D.A.'s office lost the case. They had a bug on Gotti at the Ravenite club, and they put a lot of time and effort into it, and they were getting good information. If the D.A. convicted Gotti, and he went to prison for fifteen years, all the stuff they had done would be worthless, and they wanted the recognition. They wanted it to be the F.B.I. that did it. And that's understandable; that's human emotion. But it *is* bothersome—the sense of one agency wanting another to fail, rather than get the people who are guilty."

There are three indispensable items for every Finnish fishing excursion: a fishing pole, a fishing buddy, and, of course, Finlandia. (As you might guess, one of these items may be a little more essential than the other two.)

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The bureau would get its wish. On February 9, 1990, Gotti and Guerrieri were acquitted. It's still unclear why; the jury had been deadlocked, 6–6, for four days. Perhaps it was the fear factor—one juror supposedly said, "I was pleased we could acquit. Now I won't have to look over my shoulder the rest of my life." Moreover, stringent rules of evidence in state cases made it impossible for Cherkasky to introduce some of his strongest tapes and testimony. And, as Cherkasky had feared, Westie James McElroy proved too repulsive a witness for many of the jurors to stomach ("Well, Mr. McElroy," Bruce Cutler demanded at one point, "if you drink or do drugs with someone, there is a fifty-fifty chance that person is going to die, isn't there?").

Immediately, the F.B.I. moved to distance itself from the carpenters' case. Never mind that James Fox had sat beside Morgenthau at the press conference, or that Bonavolonta had given the case a thumbs-up in private. The February 11, 1990, edition of *The New York Times* contained the following passage: "Emphasizing that the F.B.I. had not participated in the cases that led to Mr. Gotti's three acquittals [including the I FORGOTTI! case], Mr. Bonavolonta said: 'We have not yet brought a case against John Gotti. When we do, he can take all the bets he wants, but he's going to prison.' "

People in the D.A.'s office were infuriated by Bonavolonta's posturing—but not as angry as they were going to be. Almost a year after the acquittal, Morgenthau and Cherkasky would discover that they, too, had been double-crossed by the F.B.I. For some time, the D.A.'s office had had probable cause to put its own bug in the Ravenite Social Club, but had backed off because the F.B.I. was already there. In return, the D.A. had asked one favor of the bureau: the F.B.I. must promise Morgenthau's office that if it overheard any talk at the Ravenite about possibly influencing a juror it would immediately share the news. James Fox, Jules Bonavolonta, and Gambino-squad leader Bruce Mouw had all given their assurances. (With a Gambino-family case, there was always concern about possible jury tampering. Suspicious of a rigged jury, the judge in the heroin-and-racketeering case of John Gotti's brother Gene had declared a mistrial.)

During the course of the carpenters' trial, the F.B.I. had in fact heard Gotti at the Ravenite discussing a juror—by name, locale, and occupation. Morgenthau's office was never told.

Cherkasky inadvertently learned about the conversation a year later. One longtime acquaintance of both Morgenthau and Cherkasky said he had never seen either of them angrier. Cherkasky felt especially betrayed, because John Gleeson of the Brooklyn U.S. Attorney's Office, a close professional friend, had also kept the secret from him. Apparently, Gleeson feared that if he broke ranks with the F.B.I. he would damage his chances of getting to prosecute the next Gotti case.

In a recent interview, the F.B.I.'s James Fox tried to downplay the incident. Fox is viewed by prosecutors as somewhat above the fray and perhaps not always privy to the dirtiest backroom dealings at the bureau. "With hindsight," he said, "we should have [disclosed the conversation to Morgenthau and Cherkasky]. But I've seen those tapes and the transcripts, and there's just hardly anything there."

The absurdity of Fox's remark became apparent one week after he made it, when a government document giving the reasons why Gotti should be held without bail in his pending case was unsealed. One of the arguments in favor of incarcerating Gotti prior to trial—a motion that was granted—was that he had allegedly tried to fix the jury in the carpenters' case. The tape excerpt from the Ravenite in support of this allegation did not fit Fox's description of "hardly anything." Gotti was heard saying, "We got one guy who's on [the jury], his name's Hoyle or something. Irish, I guess. Boyle [the correct name] or something. He's a lineman. He lives here in Gramercy. Works, like, the lower West Side. . . . Maybe we can reach him. . . "

It had been the plan of Morgenthau's office to make the carpenters' case the first blow of a one-two punch. If Gotti was convicted of ordering the O'Connor assault, he would get some jail time—enough, anyway, to destroy his aura of invincibility, if not break his spirit. Then the D.A. would hit Gotti with a far bigger crime: the murder of Paul Castellano. Pat Dugan, another assistant D.A. in Morgenthau's office, had been working on the Castellano homicide almost from the day it happened.

But after the failure of Gotti II, it was time to re-evaluate the strategy. A series of meetings took place among all the key jurisdictions to determine who would get the next crack at Gotti.

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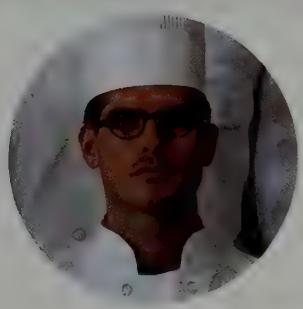


"You may have to live in a crowd,
but you do not have to live like it."

~Henry Van Dyke, 1905~

OLIVER PEOPLES
LOS ANGELES

The D.A.'s office figured that if it faced any real competition over the Castellano homicide—which would surely be the cornerstone of the next Gotti case—it would come from Walter Mack, the former head of the Manhattan strike force. (Mack had since been named senior litigation counsel with the Manhattan U.S. Attorney's Office.) Mack had indicted Castellano, and ever since the assassins at Sparks Steak House had dispatched the Mob boss to a higher court than the one at Foley Square, he had been investigating the homicide. In conjunction with Dugan of the D.A.'s office, Mack had convened a grand jury to hear evidence about the murder. This had led to a signed agreement: if the case developed into a family RICO, Mack would get it; if a simple homicide, Dugan would prosecute.

All throughout 1990, as the discussion over who would get Gotti continued, the D.A.'s office remained clueless that the F.B.I. and the Brooklyn U.S. attorney had withheld the crucial information about possible jury tampering. It was not yet apparent that the bureau and the Brooklyn office had made a love match and were intent on doing Gotti III together. The match made sense, though. It wasn't necessarily that the F.B.I. so loved Brooklyn or had unswerving confidence in its head man, Andy Maloney. But at least you could say this for Maloney: he was willing to let the F.B.I. have its way.

Gotti said on the tape, "We got one guy who's on [the jury].... He's a lineman. He lives here in Gramercy.... Maybe we can reach him."

Meanwhile, the F.B.I. was losing its love for Manhattan. Giuliani had been the bureau's kind of guy—ambitious, forceful, and politically powerful. But now Rudy was gone, and, after an interim boss, the man who replaced him, Otto Obermaier, was not an F.B.I. favorite. "Obermaier won't tell the F.B.I., 'Do whatever you want,' " says one of his fans in government. While Giuliani tended to be overzealous, Obermaier believed in prosecutorial restraint. A self-styled "philosopher king," he once likened ABSCAM to dropping Bo Derek into the Notre Dame locker room. Equally troubling from the F.B.I.'s perspective, Obermaier almost never called a press conference, even *after* a conviction. "The F.B.I. wants publicity, and that's one reason their relationship with Obermaier is strained," one prosecutor says. "Damn right they will take it to Maloney instead."

Today, Obermaier's office does not appear to be making many cases, and he has gotten bad press as a result. In part, it's just appearances, because he keeps a low profile. But it is also because the F.B.I. tends to do its "forum shopping" in Brooklyn these days.

Still, the Manhattan D.A.'s office and the Manhattan U.S. Attorney's Office were confident that one or the other would get Gotti III. After all, the Castellano killing *took place* in Manhattan. Not only that, the Ravenite bug that yielded the most important evidence for Gotti III was Manhattan-based. (True, Brooklyn had gotten the court order to install the bug—but so what?) And everyone knew that the jury pool was better in Manhattan, more difficult for Gotti to tamper with. Plus, there was the sweat-equity argument—Mack and Dugan had conducted their grand-jury probe into the Castellano homicide for an astounding thirty-six months and interviewed an estimated two thousand witnesses.

And even though Obermaier was not considered a forceful advocate of RICO, he would not be the one trying the case if it ended up with his office. It would be Walter Mack, and it was hard to think of a more seasoned organized-crime prosecutor. Even the F.B.I. acknowledged as much. John Gleeson, in Brooklyn, was a first-rate lawyer, but, in the words of one of his colleagues, "he has no passion."

The first meeting to discuss Gotti's fate took place at F.B.I. headquarters in February 1990, only days after the acquittal in the carpenters' case. Obermaier and Mack, Morgenthau and Cherkasky, and Maloney and Gleeson were all present. Mack still appeared to be the front-runner. But by September, when the second meeting was held, at the Manhattan U.S. Attorney's Office, Mack no longer held out any hope. Instead, in dismay over seeing years of work on the Castellano homicide go down the drain, he announced his resignation.

By November, when the final meeting was held in Washington, it was already a *fait accompli:* Gotti III would go to the Brooklyn U.S. attorney. The F.B.I.'s James Fox denies that the bureau played any role in directing the case to Brooklyn. A knowledgeable party strongly disagrees: "The F.B.I.'s actions determined where the case was to be brought."

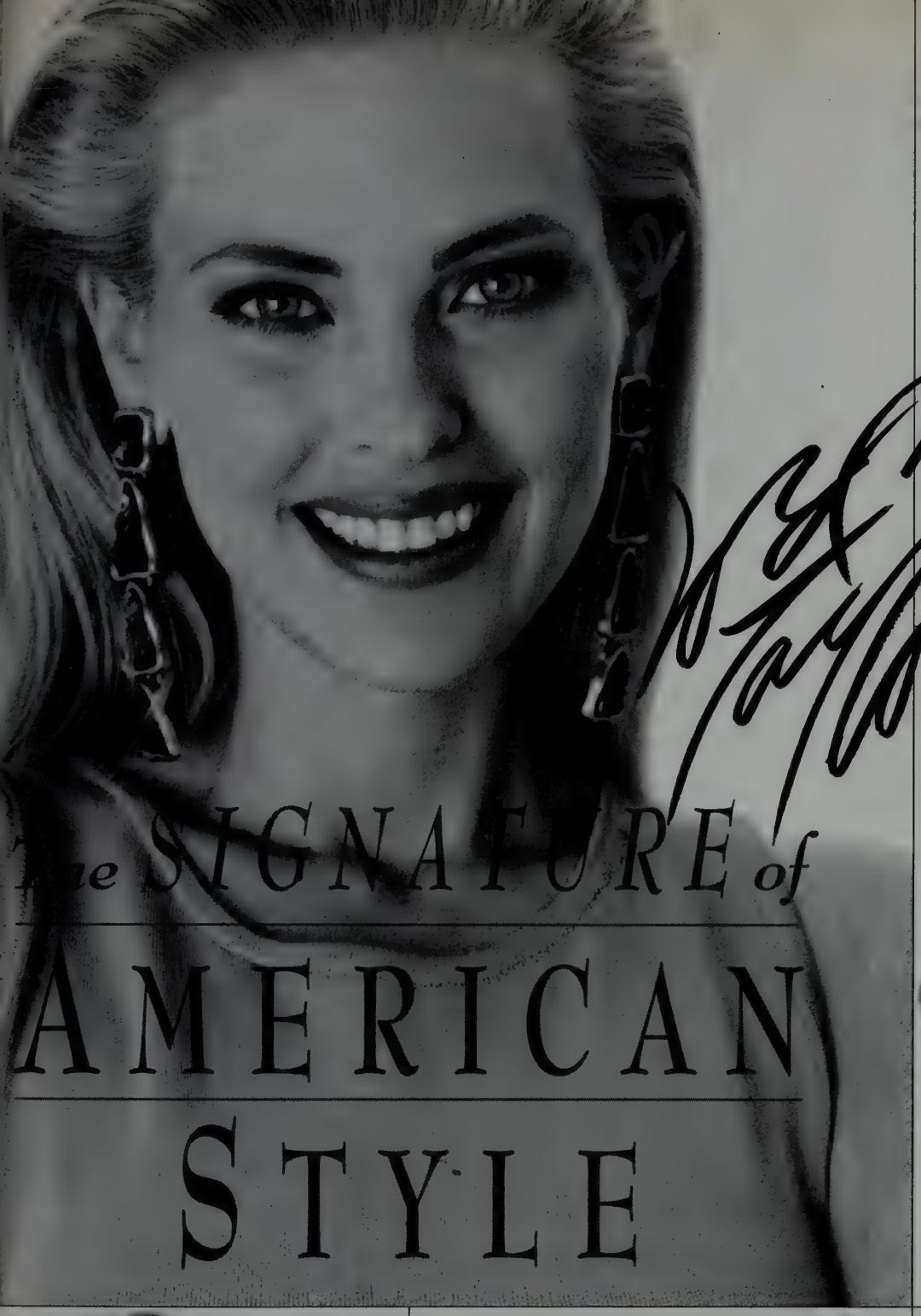
It had taken a while for Walter Mack to realize that the F.B.I. had stabbed him in the back. The moment of truth came when Bruce Mouw, the head of the F.B.I.'s Gambino squad, refused to let Mack have access to the Ravenite tapes. "Mack was red-faced, furious," recalls one of his friends. "He was extremely offended; he had been a real friend to the bureau," an F.B.I. veteran says. "He felt the bureau turned on him. And rightly so, because the bureau did. Here he had the Castellano murder case, and he conducted that grand jury for thirty-six months. Then he asks for some of the Ravenite tapes pertaining to the homicide and the bureau says no."

Why? This bureau veteran has a theory: "The bug was all F.B.I.—no other agency, no task force, no joint investigation. But Mack's homicide case was a joint F.B.I. and New York City police investigation. And the bureau *always* favors an all-bureau case over a joint case. That's traditional."

At long last, the bureau possesses what it has wanted all along—a pure F.B.I. case against the most famous mobster of modern times.

Well, almost. The tapes made by the State Organized Crime Task Force will be used by prosecutors, no thanks to the F.B.I., which, according to a well-placed source, did its best to downplay their usefulness, even to the detriment of the case.

The Gotti III indictment was filed in December 1990. Aside from conspiring to kill Castellano and his chauffeur/underboss, Gotti is charged with ordering three other murders and one attempted murder, running illegal gambling rings in New York and Connecticut, loansharking, obstruction of justice, bribing a public servant, conspiracy to defraud the United States (trying to fool the government into thinking he sells plumbing supplies and sewing-related items), and failing to file a federal tax return for the last six years. Gotti's



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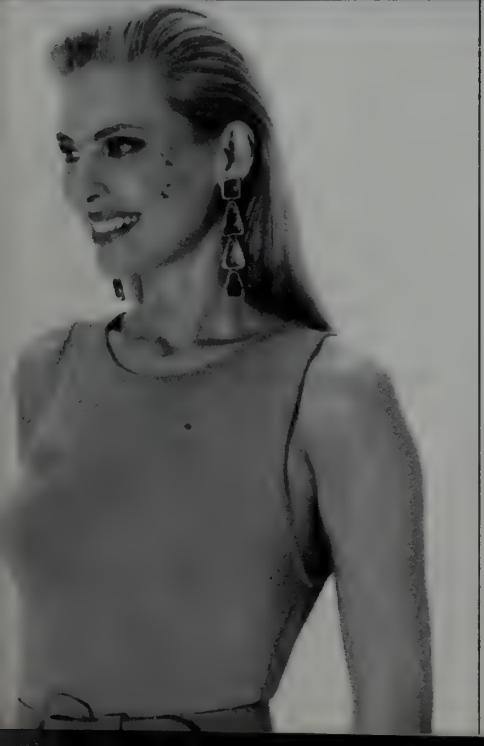

Shapes shift. Hemlines drift. Among the first, an ankle-grazing swirl of powerful femininity from Anne Klein by Louis Dell'Olio. Chartreuse silk divided skirt to revel in now through summer, 4 to 12, 555.00 Matching tank top, viscose, S,M,L, 160.00 & suede belt, 50.00 Fifth Avenue & selected stores. Call our Red Rose Service Personal Shopping, 1-800-348-6940.

co-defendants included Frank "Frankie Loc" Locascio and Salvatore "Sammy Bull" Gravano, supposedly his new underboss (the original one got blown up).

A fourth defendant, Thomas Gambino, was included in the original indictment—because, says an insider, the F.B.I. wanted an additional name to add weight to the case. It subsequently dawned on the U.S. Attorney's Office that this was a tactical error: Tommy Gambino is the nephew of the late Paul Castellano. As *Daily News* columnist Jerry Capeci put it, "Wouldn't you like to have the nephew of the man you are accused of killing sitting next to you and smiling at you?" Fortunately for Maloney's office, the judge granted a last-minute motion to sever Gambino from Gotti III.

Then, in mid-November, the U.S. attorney got an even luckier break. Sammy Bull agreed to become a protected witness and testify for the government. Gravano's defection must have come as an enormous blow to Gotti and made the government all the more confident of a victory.

Perhaps too confident. In a highly unusual move, Andy Maloney has been taking more and more responsibility for trying the case away from John Gleeson. Rumor has it that Maloney will deliver the government's opening statement. "John is very unhappy," says one of Gleeson's friends. (Maloney and Gleeson declined to be interviewed. In a terse reply to a letter outlining the contents of this story, Maloney wrote, "I can only say that many of the various themes expressed by your 'sources' and referred to in your letter have little basis in fact or reality.")

Supporters of Maloney believe that, for all his shortcomings as a scholar, he is a far better trial lawyer than Gleeson, and that the combination of the two men will make for a formidable prosecution team. Ironically, the F.B.I., which campaigned so aggressively to steer the case to Brooklyn, does not seem to agree that Maloney is an asset, and has attempted to dissuade him from relegating Gleeson to second fiddle.

Another concern is whether the Brooklyn office is up to speed on the Castellano murder. Surprisingly, this research task has been assigned to Patrick Cotter, the most junior assistant U.S. attorney on the prosecution team. Cotter does not have the advantages of Walter Mack and Pat Dugan, with their three years of grand-jury hearings and two thousand witnesses. The Ravenite tapes may prove insufficient to tie Gotti conclusively to the double homicide at Sparks Steak House; in many of them, he appears to deny his role in the rubout.

On a more positive note, however, the Ravenite tapes capture Gotti describing in no uncertain terms his membership in a Mafia enterprise and his propensity for violence. Among the gems: "Cosa Nostra. We are where we belong. . . . And this is gonna be a Cosa Nostra till I die." And: "I was in jail when I whacked him [Gambino associate Robert DiBernardo]. I knew why it was being done. I done it anyway." And: "Anytime you got a partner who don't agree with us, we kill him." And intriguingly, given recent events: "If I'm in the fucking can, this family is gonna be run by Sammy [Gravano]."

Gravano's defection must have come as an enormous blow to Gotti and made the government all the more confident of a victory.

In another conversation, Gotti is enraged to learn of unwanted competition from a Greek gambling operation. "We got a game there for twenty years!" he says. "Is this fucking Greek's name Spiro? You tell this punk, I, me, John Gotti, will sever your motherfucking head off! You cocksucker!"

Toss in the fact that Gotti has lost the services of his thrice-victorious attorney, Bruce Cutler, and he appears to face even more difficult odds. In arriving at his decision to disqualify Cutler, Judge Glasser accepted the government's argument that the lawyer has acted as "house counsel" for the Gambino enterprise. He noted, for example, that Cutler has received "benefactor payments" from Gotti to represent other family members ("I gave youse $300,000 in one year; youse didn't defend *me*," Gotti says to a third party in one bugged conversation, referring to Cutler). And because Cutler was party to conversations the government plans to play in court, the lawyer would have been able to interpret them for the jury as an unsworn witness.

Glasser also disqualified Gerald Shargel and John Pollok, lawyers for two of the other defendants, on similar grounds. This was perhaps an even bigger blow to Gotti. In the carpenters' trial, Shargel was said to have damaged the government's case far more effectively than Cutler. (Despite this, Gotti and his gang sound rather unappreciative of their attorneys in many of the Ravenite conversations. "Where does it end?" Gotti asks at one point. "Gambino crime family? This is the Shargel, Cutler, and who-do-you-call-it crime family!" "They wind up with the money," Sammy Bull agrees, to which Frankie Loc adds, "They're overpriced, overpaid, and underperformed.")

Not content with getting Bruce Cutler disqualified, the government now seems eager to use the Ravenite tapes to indict the lawyer on charges of tax fraud and obstruction of justice. Gotti makes reference to paying his lawyers "under the table," and in one conversation he unintentionally offers this advice to the U.S. attorney: "If they wanna really break Bruce Cutler's balls, what did he get paid off me?. . . I paid tax on $36,000. What could I have paid *him?*" And in March 1990, Gotti and Cutler held a discussion in the Ravenite hallway about Anthony "Tony Roach" Rampino, a convicted heroin dealer who was about to share with the grand jury his supposed firsthand knowledge of the Castellano shooting. "You wake him up, open his eyes," Gotti instructed Cutler. Five days later, Rampino refused to testify and was held in contempt.

Needless to say, there will be no small irony if the government succeeds in making an obstruction case against Bruce Cutler, considering the extent to which government employees have stymied one another in bringing John Gotti to justice. But, for now at least, the infighting is done. The prosecution of Gotti has become the Maloney-Gleeson-F.B.I. show, and there is no choice for anyone else still in government but to cooperate; the stakes are too high. All that remains are some bruised feelings. And, for a few, embarrassment over what has been a sorry spectacle. Even a former F.B.I. agent admits, "If we just worked together, it would be a beautiful machine. That's the way it's supposed to go."

And who knows? Maybe if everyone had, John Gotti would right now be serving time as a convicted racketeer. □

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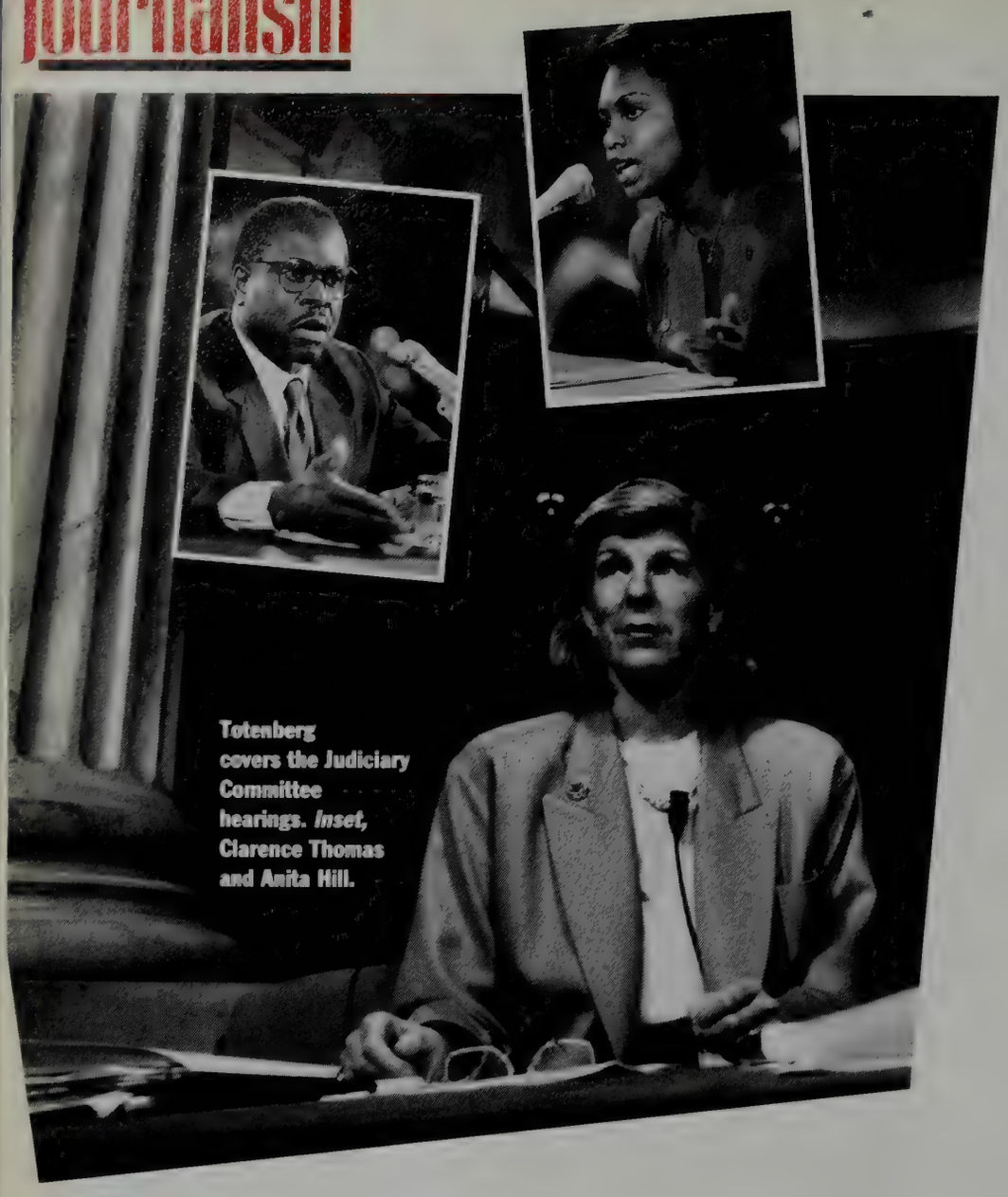

Totenberg covers the Judiciary Committee hearings. *Inset,* Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill.

NINA TOTENBERG: QUEEN OF THE LEAKS

With Senate Republicans screaming for blood over Anita Hill's leaked testimony, veteran reporter Nina Totenberg is under fire—again

BY ANN LOUISE BARDACH

Nina Totenberg is having a terrible week. She even tries to wangle out of our interview, then only reluctantly agrees to it. Since she read portions of Anita Hill's confidential affidavit to National Public Radio's nine million stunned listeners on October 6—very nearly torpedoing Clarence Thomas's Supreme Court nomination—she has quickly discovered the downside of journalistic celebrity. Although Totenberg has been well known to press hounds throughout her twenty-year career, the Anita Hill leak, which incited a weeklong national television marathon and forever changed how American politicians think about women, has rocketed her into the front ranks of media fame. In what Totenberg calls a "shoot the messenger" diversionary tactic, the spotlight suddenly swung away from Clarence Thomas, even Anita Hill, and smack onto Totenberg.

First, a feverish Alan Simpson, the Republican senator from Wyoming, assailed Totenberg's methods, motives, and ethics while the two of them were guesting on *Nightline*. Following the show, Simpson accosted her in the street, where the two had a full-tilt, epithet-strewn mêlée. Having barely regained her equanimity from attacks by conservative senators who accused her of ruining the lives of both Thomas and Hill, Totenberg then found herself at the bull's-eye center of a media catfight among the Washington press corps.

She's not sure if it's been the worst week of her life, she says, but "it certainly has been in the top five." Sitting in her cramped corner NPR cubicle, Totenberg answers the continually ringing phone, fielding her calls by pretending to be someone else. Although there is plenty of prestige and power to be had from working for NPR, there are few material rewards. Totenberg does not have a private office or a secretary. Her salary of $65,000 is closer to Peter Jennings's wardrobe budget than to his earnings.

"Who should I say is calling? Can I tell her what this is about?" she asks over and over again, deciding whether or not the caller is a quack. Owing to her reputation for breaking stories, she is the constant recipient of scoops, tips, and leaks. "They fling them over her transom," says her colleague Linda Wertheimer, a twenty-five-year veteran reporter and a host of NPR's daily news show *All Things Considered*.

Totenberg looks smaller and softer than she does on her frequent *Nightline* and *MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour* appearances. With her blue eyes and strawberry-blond hair, wearing a calf-length cream-colored ensemble with sensible heels, she could be Central Casting's pick for the role of a Supreme Court reporter. Still, it is the voice that gets you. Like her fellow divas at NPR, Cokie Roberts and Linda Wertheimer, Totenberg has one of those voices, at once commanding and calming, that people never tire of listening to, a voice that says, "I have some bad news, but there's nothing to worry about."

Totenberg, who is forty-seven, was born and raised in Scarsdale, New York.

We were cruisin' Highway 34 when Lenny said, "Take the left fork."

"Why?" I asked. Lenny's answer, "Why not?" My husband the navigator. The kids spotted icicles on the shady side of the rocks. More advice from Lenny: "Take the trail between those two big boulders." I was dubious. But Lenny repeated, "Why not?" adding, "the Sidekick® is built to go just about anywhere." So off we went. Four wheelin' uphill. Plenty of power from its 16-valve engine. Lenny was in all his glory. "Go left." An old Doobie Brothers cassette played. A deer bounded by just to our right. I checked the mirror to see if the kids saw her, but they were asleep. "This Sidekick is almost too comfortable," I whispered. Lenny winked at me and said, "Pull over under that tree." I smiled and answered, "Why not?"

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She dropped out of Boston University for a job at the *Boston Record-American*. Eager to be near the country's political pulse, she moved to Washington, D.C., in 1968, writing for *Roll Call* until she landed a job at the now defunct *National Observer*. It was at the *Observer* that she carved out her beat, the Supreme Court, which has remained her primary stamping ground for more than two decades. During her five-year stint at the *Observer*, Totenberg put herself on the map with a crackling profile of F.B.I. director J. Edgar Hoover, earning Hoover's enmity for the rest of his life. Totenberg continued her career at *New Times*, a sassy magazine that lived and died in the seventies; there she penned a wicked manifesto entitled "The Ten Dumbest Members of Congress."

Totenberg has been NPR's legal-affairs correspondent since 1975, long enough to witness its transformation from an alternative-fringe outpost to a mainstream media institution and Washington powerhouse. For the serious players in the nation's capital, listening to NPR news is as de rigueur as reading *The Washington Post* or watching *Nightline*. Although lacking the glamour of television, NPR provides its reporters more than six hours of daily radio time to showcase their goods. As a result, all of "the troika," as Wertheimer, Roberts, and Totenberg are known, are frequently called to guest on television.

Although the Anita Hill story may be the crowning coup of Totenberg's career to date, it is only the latest in a stream of scoops. She has been lauded for her coverage of the Watergate trials, the doomed G. Harrold Carswell nomination, Iran-contra, Chief Justice William Rehnquist's questionable past, the Bork battle, the trials and tribulations of Edwin Meese and his cohort William Bradford Reynolds. Clarence Thomas is not the only Supreme Court nominee who has been jeopardized by Totenberg's revelations. In 1987 she blew the nomination of Douglas Ginsburg out of the water by revealing that the bearded Harvard scholar had been a dope smoker.

"For a long, long time, Nina has consistently done terrific work," says reporter and author Nicholas von Hoffman. "So much of broadcast journalism is mindlessness, but Nina begins where most reporters end. It really makes her outstanding." Among Totenberg's fans are at least two Supreme Court justices, both recently retired, who were willing to speak about her on the record. "A fine reporter," Justice William Brennan told me. "I've known her since I was sworn in, which was January 1972," said Justice Lewis Powell in his rolling southern accent, "and I generally have a high opinion of her. She takes great care to get the facts straight."

Not surprisingly, Totenberg is on a first-name basis with virtually all of the clerks and secretaries at the Supreme Court and with many of the wives of the justices. She has also been known to socialize with several of the justices. It is precisely her chumminess with this august group that has incited a slew of heated rumors throughout the years. The most insistent gossip has it that she had an affair in the seventies with the late justice Potter Stewart, who was married.

"She said, 'You are an evil, ugly, bitter person, and all your colleagues hate you,'" claims Alan Simpson.

Rita Braver, who covers the Court for CBS, says she has no personal knowledge about the alleged affair, but says, "Nina knows that it's out there. She even jokes about it. Once, she told me, 'Everyone always says I got stories because I slept with a Supreme Court justice,' but I didn't have the nerve to ask her if she did." Totenberg says she and Stewart were friends, but indignantly denies the sexual allegation, attributing it to the fact that "there were virtually no women reporters back then, and I think the men I worked with could not imagine me getting stories any other way."

Totenberg's critics burst into a chorus of "Foul!" in 1977, when she reported an astonishingly insider item concerning the Court's disposition toward an appeal from former Nixon top dogs and Watergate conspirators H. R. Haldeman, John Ehrlichman, and John Mitchell. Totenberg broadcast that the Court had voted, 5–3, against reviewing the infamous case, and that all three dissenters were Nixon appointees. The report stunned many, because Court votes concerning appeals are held in secret. Moreover, the story claimed that Chief Justice Warren Burger, one of the Nixonians, had postponed announcing the outcome of the vote in hopes of persuading others on the Court to change their minds. Totenberg's story embarrassed the Court and raised potential legal problems concerning the decision, not to mention a few eyebrows. The *New York Post* even ran a gossip item proclaiming that Justice Stewart, "said to be a close friend of Totenberg's," was the "most popular choice" as the story's source. Totenberg denied that Stewart was her source, and decried the charge as "sexist."

Bill Kovach, the former *New York Times* editor, now curator of Harvard's Nieman Foundation, is inclined to agree. "It's astounding to me how Nina becomes a lightning rod for other journalists. She is one of the most knowledgeable and aggressive reporters in the business, but whenever she breaks a story, the first reaction in the Washington press corps is 'What do you want? She's sleeping with a justice or someone else.' No one says these things about any male reporter, some of whom wouldn't think twice about sleeping with someone to get a story."

Even Totenberg's toughest critics concede that she deserves plenty of glory for the Anita Hill scoop. (*Newsday*'s Timothy Phelps actually broke the story the night before NPR's broadcast, but only Totenberg got her hands on a copy of Hill's confidential affidavit, much of which she read on the air.) As far back as July, Totenberg says, "there were sexual-harassment rumors" circling the nomination of Clarence Thomas, "but I couldn't nail them down." She didn't discover Anita Hill's name until much later, "but I knew about her before I got the affidavit. . . . For me, the affidavit was the icing on the cake. I had plenty to go with before that. . . and I sort of stumbled over it by accident." NPR vice president for news Bill Buzenberg says that Totenberg had the Hill affidavit for five days before she spilled the beans. During that time, Totenberg found and interviewed Anita Hill in Oklahoma, then found a corroborating witness, Susan Hoerchner, the state judge who ended up testifying before the Judiciary Committee. Hoerchner's interview "was enormously important to me," says Totenberg, "because even after I checked Anita Hill's credentials up the wazoo and everybody said she was a saint, that her integrity was the highest, that she was a Bork supporter, a conservative, and an Evangelical—still, she is only one person. And I wanted some evidence that this wasn't a story that suddenly came out now." Rita Braver says, "This was a very well-reported story

Don't Be Bound By Convention

that went beyond circus reporting. Nina was scared of the story, and that's why she worked so hard on it. Anyone who broke the story would have got a lot of flak."

"Nobody has disputed the truth or accuracy of my story," says Totenberg, "that a credible witness made a serious allegation to the Judiciary Committee that was largely not investigated.... Hill's name had been forwarded to the Judiciary Committee, but they dropped the ball. They said, 'Look, she wants confidentiality. Good-bye. We're not going to send any investigators to the E.E.O.C.; the chairman is not going to talk to you. Nothing.' And then some senators got wind of it, I'm told, and basically pitched a fit." Finally, Democratic committee chairman Joe Biden sent the F.B.I. out to interview Hill. "I don't think there even would have been an F.B.I. report if other senators hadn't objected to Biden's failure to investigate," says Totenberg. "Then the reports came back, and they did nothing with them." Moreover, the first time most of the senators on the committee saw the F.B.I. report was the night before the committee voted. Although many liberals were quick to blame committee Republicans for burying Anita Hill's allegations, the initial decision not to investigate further was Biden's. Several longtime Capitol observers say that Biden simply never got it—never understood that sexual harassment was a serious charge. Nor was he alone on the committee with this miscalculation, according to insiders. And Thomas's supporters couldn't have been more pleased with Biden's myopia. One of Orrin Hatch's top aides told me, "We think Biden did just fine."

Baffled by the committee's inertia, Anita Hill finally wrote her own affidavit, which she submitted to the committee. Senator Paul Simon, who was the only committee member who bothered to phone Hill prior to the vote, says that she "asked me to distribute copies of her statement to *all* the members of the Senate, but to keep her name confidential. I said, 'You can't distribute it to one hundred senators and keep the thing confidential. You have to make a very difficult decision—whether to go public or not.' " Still, Hill could have met with the Judiciary Committee in closed session, one of several options never extended to her. "It could have been done," says Simon, and "in hindsight, that would have been the smart thing to do." When Hill decided not to disclose her identity, someone decided to do it for her.

After Totenberg made Hill's charges public, Thomas supporters went into an apoplectic fury over the leak and sought to divert the focus from the substance of the charges to the evil of leaking. Clarence Thomas, who had received the lowest rating from the American Bar Association of any Supreme Court nominee in history, had been sold to the American public on the basis of character—the impoverished black child from the backwoods of Georgia who had triumphed in life. "They built his reputation on character," says Totenberg, "and when his character was assailed, there was very little left to rest on." When I asked a senior aide of a conservative Republican on the Judiciary Committee why the administration didn't offer a black nominee with stronger qualifications, she answered bluntly, "There aren't any," meaning none deemed to be both qualified and politically correct.

Although Totenberg has taken her share of body blows over the years, she says she never foresaw the very personal reaction against her generated by the Anita Hill story. Two days after breaking the story, Totenberg found herself on *Nightline* defending her honor against a snarling Alan Simpson, a staunch Thomas supporter. "Let's not pretend you're objective here," Simpson blasted at her. "That just would be absurd." Comparing herself to Anita Hill, a somewhat flustered Totenberg responded, "I, too, don't want to be the messenger who's blamed."

It was plagiarism, Hunt said, not sexual harassment, which prompted Totenberg's departure.

When the show ended, the lanky Simpson pursued Totenberg outside the building, lecturing her on ethics, which precipitated a scalding temper fit from Totenberg as she hurried into a waiting limo (provided for *Nightline* guests). Simpson, who held the door ajar so that she couldn't leave, insists, "I did not scream, shriek, or shout. I asked her, 'Did you ever read the code of professional [journalistic] ethics? How about the part that says you respect the privacy and dignity of those you deal with?' Then I told her, 'Rest easy, you brought another one down,' " a reference to Totenberg's Ginsburg/marijuana story. "She said, 'You are an evil, ugly, bitter person, and all your colleagues hate you,' " claims Simpson. "And she said, 'You big shit. Fuck you!' Three times she said it!"

"He was in a complete rage. He was out of control," responds Totenberg. "I said, in essence, 'You're a bully, and you're not going to bully me.' " However, she claims she never called him an evil, bitter man, a charge she finds "interesting," and denies saying that everybody hates him. "I don't know that to be true," says Totenberg with a smile. "I certainly did use some choice epithets," she concedes. "I think I told him to shut the fuck up."

The next salvo blew out of a *Wall Street Journal* editorial written by its Washington bureau chief, Albert Hunt, in which he recalled charges of plagiarism against Totenberg nineteen years ago, when she was a reporter for *The National Observer*. Days earlier, Totenberg had given an interview to *The Washington Post* in which she spoke of her own experience with sexual harassment when she was a young reporter at the *Observer*, implying that it was the cause of her leaving. Wrong, said Hunt, who unearthed a Totenberg profile of Tip O'Neill in which she had copied a significant amount of material—all quotations—from a *Post* piece written a week earlier by Myra MacPherson. It was plagiarism, Hunt said, not sexual harassment, which prompted Totenberg's departure. "Purposeful plagiarism is one of the cardinal sins of journalism from which reporters can never recover their credibility," wrote Hunt. "There is no statute of limitations on that judgment."

Totenberg doesn't deny the charge. "I made a mistake. I have no intention of defending that piece of work as good. It wasn't. On the other hand, I don't think I should be taken out and executed at dawn, which is sort of what he implied in the column." Additionally, she insists that her leaving the *Observer* had as much to do with ongoing sexual harassment from one of her superiors, whom she declines to identify.

Nicholas von Hoffman, who was an editor at *The Washington Post* from the mid-sixties through the mid-seventies, says Hunt's charges are trumped-up at

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best. "At that time, it was an industry practice to borrow quotes, or quote quotes. It was done all the time. I remember, because I was always screaming about it at the *Post*, which was among the first to credit sources. *The New York Times* was the last. And broadcast journalism still doesn't credit half the time." Steve Isaacs, a seventeen-year veteran of *The Washington Post* and now associate dean of the Columbia School of Journalism, says flatly, "It was not only standard to steal quotes from other journals and journalists, it was almost considered wimpish to attribute to others. She is one sensational reporter, and I hold her up to students as one."

However, Totenberg's case was notable because she lifted substantial portions of quoted material, not just a phrase or a sentence. Although the practice is now a journalistic taboo, many insiders view "lifting quotes" as far less serious than the wholesale fabrication of material—the kind that cost Janet Cooke her job at *The Washington Post*—or outright plagiarism, which did in Alex Haley.

By week's end there seemed to be a backlash directed at the *Journal*. *Time* magazine took a smack at Hunt, questioning his motives and suggesting that they may have been more political than moral: "Observers noted that the *Journal* had editorially championed Thomas and attacked Totenberg for her role in the Hill leaks: What's more, the paper had been criticized for its minimum coverage of Hill's allegations."

Hunt, plainly smarting from the *Time* piece, said he had brought up the "plagiarism business only because she said she was fired over sexual harassment, which simply wasn't the case." Hunt also said he had no ideological beef. "I thought Anita Hill was telling the truth." He insisted that he would have published Anita Hill's affidavit "in a minute" if he had had it. Since the *Journal* waited three days before running a substantial story on Hill's charges, it is a claim that some find difficult to believe.

Totenberg sums up the incident as "a stupid mistake. And I have never done it again—that I know of anyway." However, several former and current staffers at *Legal Times*, a D.C. weekly, claim she did do it again at least once, in 1987. During the Douglas Ginsburg confirmation process, *Legal Times* reporter Aaron Freiwald had learned that Ginsburg was guilty of some fairly serious résumé inflation: the nominee had said he had considerably more trial experience than he really had. Because *Legal Times* hit the stands on Mondays, the editors sometimes passed their hot items to other media in exchange for attribution. "Somehow Nina had heard that we had a hot Ginsburg story," recalls one former staffer at *Legal Times*. "She called us around four o'clock on Friday afternoon and said she was going on the air with another Ginsburg story and that she would love to see whatever we had. I told her it concerned résumé inflation. She said if she used it, she would credit us on the air."

A day earlier, Totenberg had stunned Washington with her marijuana scoop on Ginsburg. "I actually walked our story over to her," remembers Aaron Freiwald. At five P.M., Totenberg went on the air with a comprehensive report concerning résumé enhancement and the nominee. She never credited *Legal Times*. "I was very upset," says Freiwald. "The story bore an alarming resemblance to what I had just given her." Eric Effron, who was then *Legal Times*'s managing editor and is now its publisher, says flatly, "I felt that we were ripped off." Totenberg claims that she had independently discovered the same material. "I remember getting their stuff, but I had the story already, and had been working on it for days," Totenberg says, while conceding, "I suppose there may have been one or two language overlaps. I phoned them thinking they had more, but they didn't. Most of my broadcast was an interview with a legal-ethics expert."

"We've had anti-Semites and racists on the Court, and we survived that."

Cokie Roberts thinks much of the heat that Totenberg gets is simply peer rivalry. "She's clearly the best in her field," says Roberts, "as well as one of the best reporters in Washington." Rita Braver describes Totenberg affectionately as "a character with a lot of character. She is fierce and fearless, and has the nerve to do a lot of things that I would never do." Braver recalls that during the Oliver North hearings there were no assigned press seats, but that she and Totenberg invariably landed front-row seats. On a few occasions, however, Totenberg was late, and someone took her seat. "Believe me," says Braver, "when Nina showed up, they were not sitting there long." Cokie Roberts says she is awed by Totenberg's grit and high standards. "She'll spend five months chasing a lead and then throw it all away, because she's so tough on evidence." "I've had more good stories ruined by the facts," says Totenberg.

Paul Gigot, who authored some of the pro-Thomas editorials in *The Wall Street Journal*, has no quarrel with Totenberg's methods or standards. "I think the thing that I would criticize Nina for is that she is simply a partisan," he says. "I mean, she is never going to get a leak that helps a conservative. All her leaks come from the enemy side."

Totenberg quickly volunteers that she is a registered Independent and points out that in the last eleven years all Supreme Court nominations have been made by Republican presidents. "The very fact that I've had virtually no Democratic nominees to check out sort of tilts the scale and makes people think that in some way I'm biased." She says that while Jimmy Carter had no Supreme Court nominees he did fill some federal judgeships, and one of Carter's nominees, Carin Ann Clauss, "was withdrawn because of a story I did," Totenberg adds proudly.

Linda Wertheimer speaks of Totenberg's "two personas," the no-nonsense investigative reporter and the private person. "Nothing bleeds over to her personal life," says Wertheimer. "She has very close relationships with her family, and she is very happily married, despite a substantial difference in age." In 1979, Totenberg married Floyd Haskell, a former Democratic senator from Colorado, who is seventy-five, twenty-eight years her senior. By all accounts, Haskell is a notably robust, athletic man, who is now writing his second novel. Although Totenberg has forgone having children, she is close to Haskell's children from his previous marriage and is a doting aunt to her sister Amy's kids.

"Nina really became Nina when she got married," says her sister Jill, a public-relations executive. "It was what we call a sea change in my business." Although Totenberg would be a dark horse to win any popularity contest in the Washington press corps, many who have worked with her offer unstinting praise. "Quite simply, she's the person you call when you're in trouble," says

Life is strange. One day you're leading sheep, the next you're leading fashion.

e's an unlikely trendsetter. Nevertheless, this Scottish shepherd is the inspiration for fall's hottest look. And if the creations of people like Valentino nd Yves Saint Laurent are any indication, plaid is definitely here to stay (for a season, anyway). "Highland Hopping," by Marie-Paule Pelle.

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Cokie Roberts. "She would lie down in the street for you."

Totenberg may have been one of the few people in Washington who weren't surprised by the recent confirmation circus. "I wrote a long piece in the *Harvard Law Review* about the confirmation process after Bork," she tells me. "And one of the major points I made was that the Judiciary Committee was a disaster waiting to happen. They don't investigate serious charges.... When I broke the Ginsburg story, once again it was news to the committee and to the White House. This committee has a history of goofing."

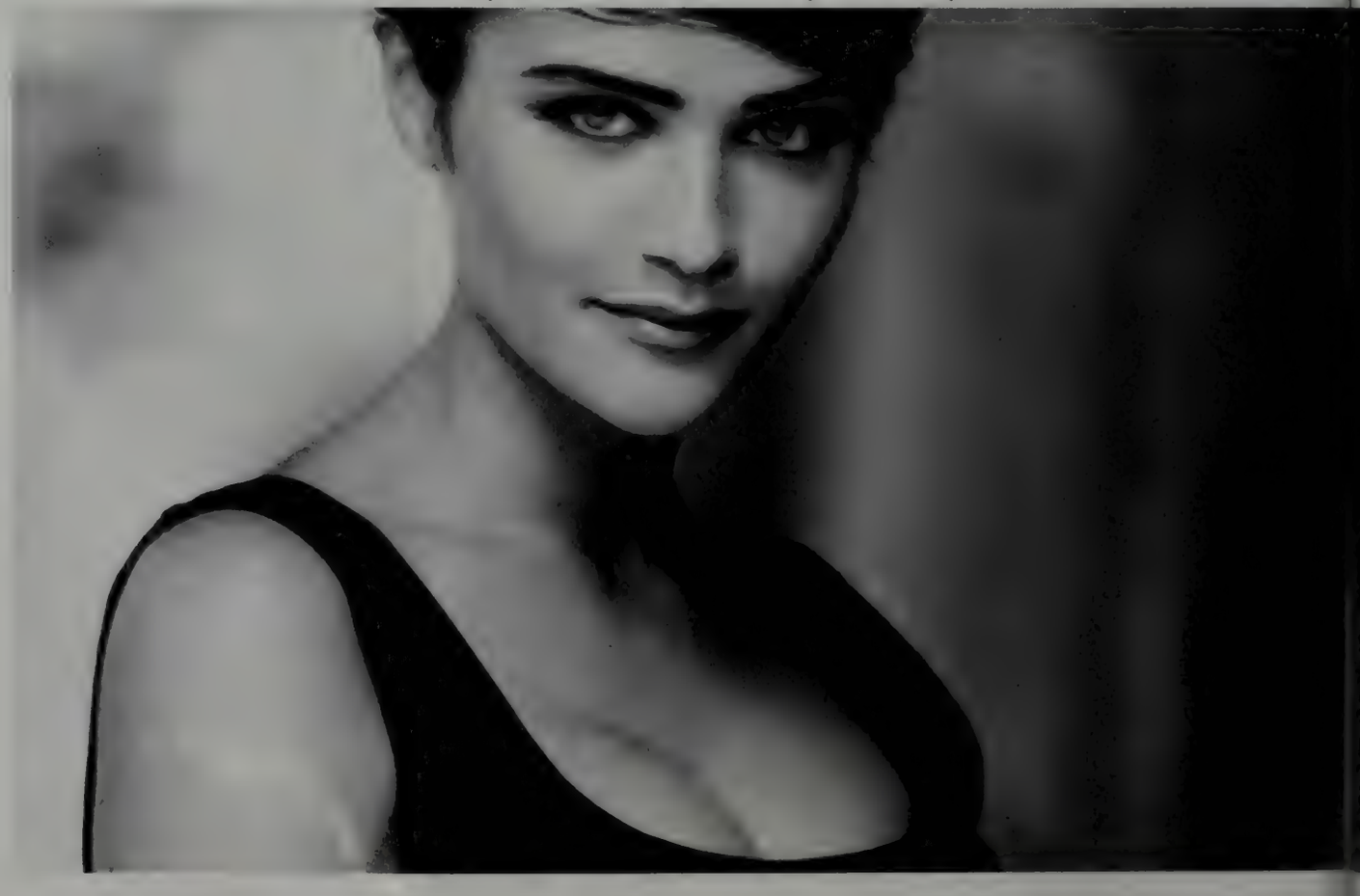
What about the odds of another Abe Fortas scenario? I ask Totenberg. Is there any concern that Thomas might have to resign, as L.B.J.'s Fortas did in the sixties, if any more stories surface? "I am sure there is that worry," says Totenberg, carefully adding, "but it would take a lot" to force a resignation. However, she has little doubt that Thomas's reputation will survive the sordid hearings. "When you compare it to Justice Black, who was an admitted member of the Ku Klux Klan, which is now only a footnote in history, certainly he can survive it. The fact is, we have had undistinguished justices on the Court before. We've had anti-Semites and racists on the Court, and we survived that. If he turns out not to be very good, we can survive that too, and if he turns out to be terrific, all for the better. He could surprise people. He's only forty-three."

The current Court, however, she says, is not in the same league with the Court she covered twenty years ago. "There were a lot of giants on that Court, both conservative and liberal, with Hugo Black and John Harlan at the two poles and Earl Warren, who was a genius of consensus building." She doesn't think there are any current geniuses, but says that "Scalia is close. He's not a genius, but he has a wonderfully agile intellect."

As for retirement predictions, she says she is not counting on Justice Harry Blackmun, who is eighty-three, to leave anytime soon. However, she says, Rehnquist, who just lost his wife, is a possibility. She also doesn't put Justice John Paul Stevens, who at seventy-one has been on the Court for sixteen years, out of the running for an early exit.

To the amazement of the most cynical observers, Clarence Thomas's bruising confirmation battle truly dazed the denizens of the District. Suddenly, *mea culpa* fever gripped the capital. First, Senator Howard Metzenbaum apologized for having asked a confirmation witness about uncorroborated accusations. Then Orrin Hatch apologized to his close pal Ted Kennedy on the Senate floor for having made the crack "I know a bridge in Massachusetts I can sell you." The next week, during a speech at Harvard, Kennedy repented for the excesses of his life and vowed to do better. The most eloquent recantation came from Alan Simpson, who had been rebuked for outdoing the infamous Senator McCarthy during the Hill-Thomas showdown. In a speech at a roast in Cheyenne, Wyoming, the senator said he was chagrined to see his "good name equated with McCarthy, sleaze, slime...and much, much more. I do not blame the media....I do not blame activist feminine [*sic*] groups....The responsibility is mine." However, without any apology, Arlen Specter, who had interrogated Anita Hill for the Republicans, mysteriously dropped his oft repeated threat of bringing perjury charges against her.

You know you drive me crazy when you do that.



Fearful of losing momentum, the White House and Thomas insisted on an immediate swearing-in, despite the death of Natalie Rehnquist the day before. It seemed to many an unseemly haste, requiring that Justice Byron White, rather than the chief justice, deliver the oath. "It clearly irked the Court," says Totenberg. Matters were made worse when the administration said that Thomas had been fully confirmed only to be publicly admonished by Justice White, who said it would not be official until the Supreme Court investiture on November 1, two weeks later. Somehow Thomas, who was clearly champing at the bit, persuaded the powers that be to move the date up one week. The following day, Thomas paid surprise visits on all the justices.

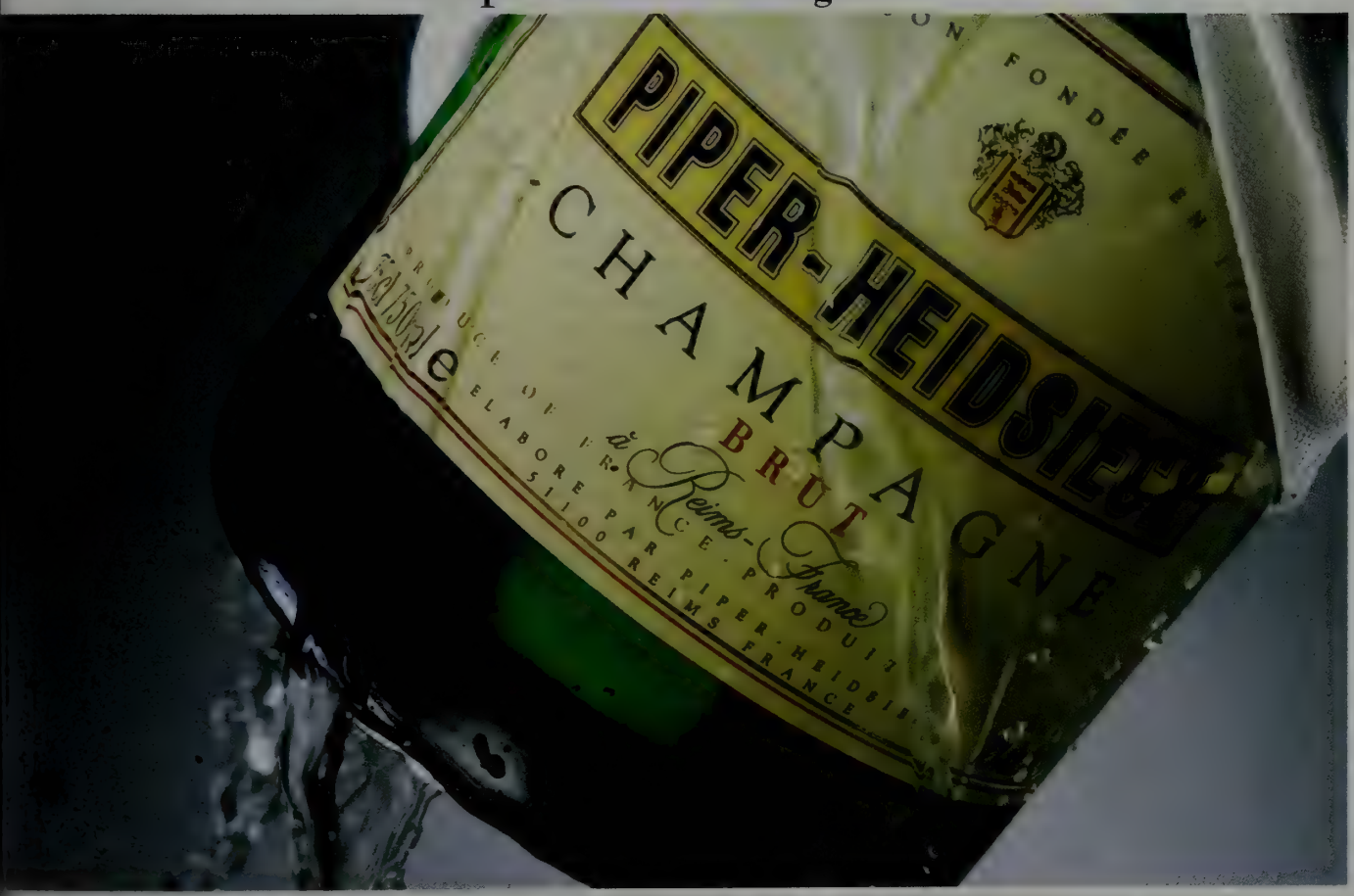
A week later, Thomas again made history by being the first Supreme Court justice to pose for the cover of *People* magazine. One of the photos accompanying his wife Virginia's teary account of their ordeal had the two of them absorbed in reading the Bible. The story precipitated a revolt at the magazine, with staffers storming into Landon Jones's office. One senior writer felt that "having him on the cover legitimized his position." The staffer says that *People* would never have put a picture of Virginia Thomas alone on the cover, and told the Thomases that it would be a cover story only if the new justice would pose. "We were stunned that he agreed," says the staffer. "It was his first week on the job. Imagine what the other justices thought." "Not much," according to Totenberg, who ran it by Court staffers. "He didn't do himself any favors with the Court," she reports. "All was not happy in Mudville."

Meanwhile, Senate Republicans, backed by the president, demanded the creation of an F.B.I. SWAT team to root out the villainous, presumably Democratic staffer or senator who had leaked Anita Hill's affidavit. Compromising with the Democrats, the Senate O.K.'d an investigation of both the Anita Hill and the Keating Five leaks. Just how leaky is Washington? Totenberg laughs and says, "It's a sieve."

The most popular suspects of the Anita Hill leak were Ricki Seidman of Kennedy's staff and Jim Brudney, who works for Metzenbaum, because of their early contact with Anita Hill. Both flatly deny it. However, each week brings a new odds-on favorite. In late October, the archconservative *Washington Times*, which is owned by the Reverend Moon, flat out accused Senator Paul Simon of being the leaker in a front-page story. Although the article said the paper had no evidence, or anyone willing to go on the record, it claimed unnamed sources in both Republican and Democratic camps. Simon quickly denied it and attributed the item to White House retribution for his stand against Thomas. The following week, suspicion fell upon Herbert Kohl, the senator from Wisconsin, who also dismissed the charge. Insiders talk of the possibility that one of Anita Hill's friends may have been more than forthcoming. However, as there would be no illegality involved, and hence no political profit, there has been little enthusiasm for this line of inquiry.

It appears that unless the rack is brought out no one is likely to confess. Senate Republicans, who pooh-poohed Anita Hill's glowing polygraph-test results, are hardly in a position now to ask staffers to submit to lie detectors. And ultimately, when push comes to shove, only *one* person can definitively identify the leaker—and Nina Totenberg ain't talking. □

Perhaps I should do it again.



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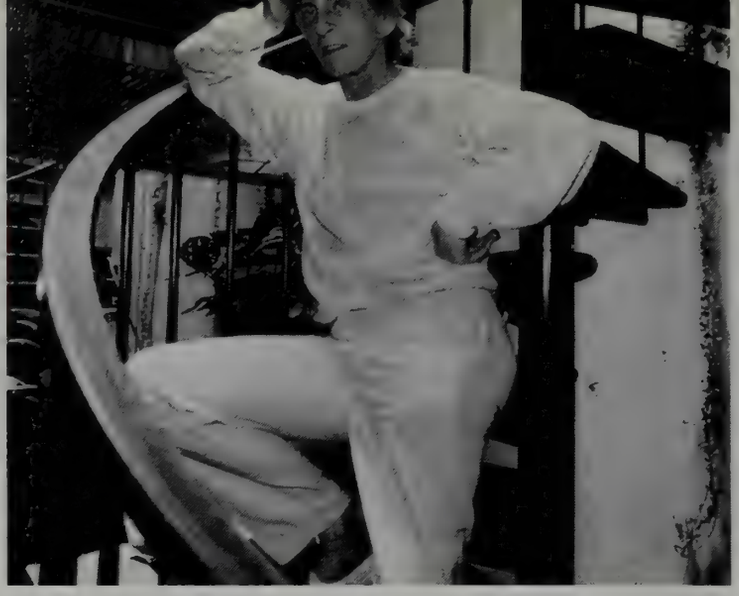

Bill Evans photographed at his Sutton Place town house not long after the disastrous Clio Awards ceremony last June.

BILL EVANS'S TWILIGHT ZONE

A behind-the-scenes report on the downward spiral of the advertising impresario and his Clio Awards

BY TRIP GABRIEL

The town house on Sutton Place doesn't look like any of its neighbors, private homes with gold-tipped ornamental ironwork around the stoops and begonia-filled window boxes. This one looks as though it had been lifted from some far shabbier part of the city and dropped down here. Gray paint is peeling off the bricks, and the front door is scraped and battered. A broken windowpane on the ground floor has been covered with cardboard. A discarded condom lies on the concrete steps leading down to the basement.

But that's nothing compared with the disheveled world behind the façade. In a living room with a cream-colored piano and a gaping hole in the ceiling, Bill Evans, the embattled owner of the Clio Awards, the Oscars of advertising, is hunkered down. Evans has been a virtual recluse since the now infamous evening last June when the annual Clio ceremony ended in public fiasco. Angry ad executives rushed onto a Manhattan stage and stole some eighty Clio statuettes after the M.C.'s —a P.R. man and a caterer—failed to produce a list of winners. Subsequent reports placed the blame squarely on Evans's shoulders, detailing how his privately owned company had suffered a financial collapse through gross mismanagement.

Ever since that night, Evans has been in hiding, as the fate of the once lucrative Clio organization plays itself out in increasingly bizarre twists. Just now, in mid-October, he is sitting in the dark—the electricity has been turned off. There is a hush over the antique-filled living room—the phones are dead.

Evans, fifty-six, has it within his power to raise the cash to restore the lights, the phones, and his opulent lifestyle, because the Clio Awards are his to sell. On September 13 he signed a letter of intent, agreeing to transfer the company to a Chicago trade publisher for $2 million up front, plus a payout of $200,000 a year for life. But he has repeatedly balked at closing the deal, citing ever more complicated reasons. "It's ridiculous, crazy, outrageous," the would-be purchaser, Ruth L. Ratny, complains to me. "He changes the terms of the deal every hour. How do you negotiate with smoke?"

Evans's behavior traces in part to the bitter humiliation he has suffered at the tarnishing of the Clios, an institution he built up over the years through inspired and vigorous promotion. He has not been willing to believe, as the advertising community insists, that the damage to his reputation is irreparable. "He has the pride of a lion," says one of a circle of lawyers and business agents who represent him, when they aren't being abruptly fired and then rehired.

But the real cause of Evans's behavior is drug abuse. Former members of his Clio staff, who walked out in May, believe he was using crack for two years prior to the company's collapse; since then the addiction has only worsened, becoming a constant, round-the-clock need. According to a member of his inner circle, Evans apparently requires a hit almost every fifteen minutes. As a result he's usually in one of two states: paranoid and inattentive as he anticipates a hit, or zoned-out and discombobulated just after smoking.

Ratny, the editor and publisher of *Screen* magazine, and her associates are aware of Evans's condition. According to an Evans adviser, someone even offered to let him smoke crack at the negotiating table or in a nearby room if he would fly to Chicago to close the deal. Nick Popovich, Ratny's chief negotiator, denies this. But Popovich adds that at one point an associate of Evans's called Chicago and insisted Evans needed $60,000 that same day. "Supposedly, there were two Dominicans there to collect it," says Popovich. He says he was told, "If Bill

The awards gala became a free-for-all as guests seized the fallen idols.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT SIMKO

doesn't get the money, he's dead." Popovich declined to advance the sum; Evans survived.

After numerous attempts to arrange a closing by phone, Popovich flew to New York. During two days of trying to contact Evans, first through his lawyers, then by banging on his door, Popovich failed to even speak to him and returned home.

"They're trying to do the deal by the book—that's the problem," one of Evans's advisers told me. "This whole thing is a drug deal. This is about drugs!" What the Ratny group failed to understand, he claimed, was that Evans was so far gone he was no longer thinking like a businessman, but like a stone addict. "If an addict gets a hit, that's all he cares about," explained the insider. "He doesn't care about his family, his friends, bills, debts, responsibility. You can say, 'Look, this is $200,000 a year for the rest of your life, this is a $2 million deal.' He doesn't care. You can say, 'They're going to take your house, your car, the Clios.' He doesn't care. It's a hit he wants. If you come to him with a hit, you'll probably buy the Clios for a hit."

Certainly, if Popovich had checked with me before coming to New York, he might have saved himself the trip. I could have told him that Evans will not meet with any outsiders; since last spring he has refused to give face-to-face interviews. The problem, it was explained to me, is the obvious one—he's unable to speak for long without betraying his need for a crack pipe. The sole exception occurred in September, when Evans spoke briefly to a reporter for Geraldo Rivera's tabloid TV show *Now It Can Be Told*. But the interview was abruptly ended by his P.R. man, Don Catterson, at the first mention of Evans's personal life.

After exhausting all the formal channels, I had thumped on the heavy black double doors at Sutton Place not long before, and to my surprise Evans had answered. In photographs from a couple of years back, he resembles an aging surfer, with thatched blond hair and a perpetual tan. But now his complexion was ashen, and the vigor seemed to have been sucked out of his face. Deep furrows were entrenched around his mouth. His eyes were sunken and dull. His hair was white, parted in the middle, and nearly shoulder-length.

I thought instantly of Howard Hughes in his squirrelly phase. Evans was wearing a button-down shirt, a red tie with the knot askew, and a campy tie bar—he suggested an old man in the habit of keeping up appearances but whose mind has lately been wandering. I asked for just a minute of his time. He replied inaudibly. Leaning closer, I asked him to repeat it.

"I can't talk without an appointment," Evans said, his voice a whispery gargle.

"But I can't get through to you to make an appointment," I protested. "Your number's not listed."

"It's listed," he answered, falling back into the shadows. He banged the door shut.

On the cover of its June 17 issue, the trade magazine *Adweek* ran a photograph that instantly conveyed what had happened at the previous week's Clio Awards for radio and print ads. Snapped just moments after the ceremony had ground to a halt and an irate audience had stampeded toward the dais, the photograph showed men in tuxedos and women in ball gowns desperately grabbing gold statuettes off a linen-covered table.

Many who saw the photograph assumed it was staged, because of the disconnectedness between the solemn glamour of an awards night and this black-tie free-for-all. But the picture wasn't staged. It was, rather, an image that stripped away many illusions. The once valued Clio was shown to be, after all, just a Barbie-like figure holding aloft what looks like a hood ornament. And the organization that administered the awards was exposed as a private, for-profit business whose chief purpose was not to honor advertising excellence but to fatten its own accounts. Four nights later, a second round of awards, for television spots, was canceled only hours before 1,500 people were expected at a gala ceremony at Lincoln Center.

Behind the rise and fall of the Clios is the story of a man who successfully exploited the ad business for nineteen years, then tumbled into a black hole that sucked the awards in, too. At the same time, the ad industry itself was partly implicated in the disaster. The nakedly covetous expressions, the greedy, grasping gestures, in the *Adweek* photo struck many as shameful. It was a vision of advertising's own *Day of the Locust*. Questions were raised about the purpose of advertising awards, with many arguing they served no legitimate role. (The Clios and most other major industry awards don't consider the success of a given ad in selling a product—that is, they ignore the very purpose of advertising.) It was said that Madison Avenue had become too hungry for prizes. Reflecting on the awards-night riot, Peter Mackey, a vice president of J. Walter Thompson, said, "By hook or by crook those people were going to walk away with their statuettes. Awards have become a drug. People are addicted to these things. They are less than worthy if they don't have one."

Bill Evans, it turned out, wasn't the only substance abuser.

Evans was a small-time adman from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, who remade himself into a showman in white-tie when he took over the Clios in 1972. He paid $150,000 for what was then a competition little known outside the ad industry. But Evans had a vision that the Clios could become as famous as the Oscars. He became an indefatigable promoter, appearing on TV talk shows around the country with a reel of Clio-winning commercials. His annual awards shows at the Waldorf Astoria or Lincoln Center were staged to evoke the Oscar ceremony, with celebrity presenters, tuxedos, and limousines. Beginning in 1987, Evans even arranged for a special on the gala to be produced by Fox TV. "It became *the* event of the year; it was *the* place to be," says one Manhattan creative director.

The pizzazz of the Clio shows came to blend with Evans's newfound identity. He renounced his staid and con-

ventional personal life, moving out of a house in Connecticut and divorcing his wife, with whom he'd had three children. He began a new life as an openly gay man. Vain about his appearance, he applied bronze makeup to give himself a year-round tan and had his collar-length hair dyed blond at Saks Fifth Avenue. He eschewed suits for brightly colored sweaters, and once boasted that he owned a different sweater for every day of the year.

The greedy, grasping gestures struck many as shameful. It was a vision of advertising's own *Day of the Locust.*

An exasperated audience confronted Don Catterson, the M.C., as the awards ceremony unraveled.

Although there were other advertising awards, some more prestigious than the Clios, Evans's sense of style made his statuette the one best known outside the industry. As Miles Drentell explained to Michael Steadman last season on *thirtysomething*, "The measure of success in this field is the Clio."

The awards' fame meant that the number of entries climbed steadily. With entry fees of $75 to $90 per submission, the Clios became a gold mine. Evans's annual revenues approached $2.5 million. In the mid-1980s he was able to buy a radio and a television station in Hawaii, and in 1988 he bought the Sutton Place town house, just around the corner from the Clio offices on East Fifty-ninth Street.

The ad industry began to grouse that Evans, who never mixed much with Madison Avenue, was a profiteer. Besides entry fees, tickets to the awards shows cost $125 to $175. Evans was further accused of greed as he inflated the number of award categories to more than two hundred. Soon it was possible to win a Clio for a shopping-bag design, a pet-product ad, or a station identification on cable TV. A certain cynicism came to surround the awards. "It's always discouraging when you win an award and there are five hundred others who also won," says the owner of one New York shop.

There were also complaints that the judges—a rotating panel of judges drawn from the industry—were not all sufficiently qualified. Still, for all the grumbling, very few ad people chose to ignore the Clios. In 1991 there were nearly 27,000 entries. "The irony," notes one copywriter, "is that among peers somebody will badmouth the Clios, but everyone shows up to get theirs when they win."

In the two years preceding the awards-night riot, Evans grew increasingly distracted from his business. He stopped showing up regularly at the office. The staff discovered that a project one of them could complete in three days was likely to take Evans three weeks. "The last year I worked for him he was never coherent," says a former receptionist. On the days he did come to work, according to Nancy Ross, vice president for U.S. operations, "he'd be flying in and out. He'd run to the back of the building, run up to the front, and then back again. Just spaced. The worst thing was you could not understand a word he would say."

A regular visitor to the offices, which were filled with antique furniture, clocks, and chandeliers, was a young man Evans called his "art dealer." One day Steve Clark, the company's P.R. consultant, dropped by and was told that Evans was not seeing anyone. "Then this guy waltzed in and was immediately let up to see Bill," Clark recalls. "I asked, 'Who's that guy?' Someone said, 'Oh, that's Bill's drug dealer.' "

In October 1988, Sean Russell entered Evans's life. Russell was a runaway from Florida who had survived on the streets of New York by selling drugs and hustling. Evans told Nancy Ross that he had picked up Russell and paid for his services the first time. A blond, tattooed young man whom former Clio staffers remember as winning and likable, Russell soon moved into the Sutton Place town house. Evans bought him a drum set and took him to the Clio Awards in a rented tux, where he sat beside Dr. Ruth Westheimer.

But Russell was restless and periodically disappeared for weeks. Evans would search for him at Covenant House, the shelter for teen runaways, where he had frequently stayed when he first came to New York. During one of these absences, in October 1989, Russell was stabbed to death by a transsexual in the hallway of a midtown apartment building.

The Clio staff assumes that Evans acquired his drug habit from Russell, who enjoyed openly smoking crack in front of the straight-arrows at the offices. Other young drifters followed Russell into Evans's life. Doormen and neighbors on Sutton Place say he ran a virtual boardinghouse for young men, whose violent arguments would split the night or spill out onto the ultra-elegant street, where the buildings back up to the East River.

"We would hear things you wouldn't believe," says Lynda Anderson, an art dealer who lived with her husband and infant son in an adjacent town house. "Things like: 'I'm gonna kill you! You did all the coke!' " One night someone shouted, "I'm gonna blow you away!" and someone else answered, "Go ahead and do it!" The couple's baby woke up howling, and they had to carry him from room to room in search of quiet. The Andersons eventually moved.

Doormen on the block sometimes noticed young men from the town house hustling on a block of East Fifty-third Street called the Chicken Walk, known for its preppy-looking male prostitutes. Other times there would be a party at Evans's and street kids would arrive in limos and BMWs. "There must be a lot of rich old suckers who take care of these kids," says a neighbor who observed the procession.

The police often investigated disturbances at the town house, often called there by Evans himself. On May 16, 1990, Evans told police he had had a fight with Bradley Wood, a friend of Sean Russell's who apparently was now Evans's main companion. On May 26, Wood told the police that Evans had threatened him. On June 17, Evans com-

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plained he'd had a "family dispute" with Wood. The next day Evans claimed Wood had punched him in the face. In February 1991, Evans again stated that Wood had assaulted him. No charges were ever pressed in any of these complaints.

Unlike Sean Russell, Bradley Wood was volatile and aggressive. Clio staffers knew him as "the psychopath," the embodiment of the "This is your brain on drugs" ad. Wood would threaten people on the sidewalk, and cops would restrain him and haul him off as an "emotionally disturbed person." "There were a number of those type runs [by officers], which all goes along with cocaine psychosis," says police lieutenant Wayne Grossnickle of Manhattan's 17th Precinct.

Police captain Joe Lisi of the 17th, who was well aware of the problems at 33 Sutton Place, once described Evans's behavior as "consistent with a person in the advanced stages of substance abuse." In early May, Lisi and his men raided the town house and found two crack pipes in a second-floor bedroom, and a third pipe broken on the floor. They arrested Wood and two other young people on charges of possession of cocaine residue and drug paraphernalia. Two days later the *New York Post* bannered the raid across the top of its "Page Six." Evans was seen by neighbors walking out the front door minutes before the police arrived.

Eventually Evans moved Wood out of Sutton Place and into the Clio building, where he slept on a fold-out couch in Evans's office. To the staff, Evans's street kids seemed to have taken over. They roamed aimlessly during the day, and late at night the party on Sutton Place would move the couple of blocks to the office with a consequent trashing of the premises. The glass top on the receptionist's desk was shattered so often the company gave up replacing it. "I'd find drug paraphernalia all over the place," says one staffer. "On the couch of the screening room. On the bar. Glass tubes, strainers, butane lighters. Powder on a desk." One day, the receptionist realized she was petrified of being left alone with Evans's friends. She walked out and never returned.

There were still some good days. "When Bill was not on drugs he could be very wonderful, sweet, and charming," recalls a woman staffer. "He got angry very quickly, but he was always remorseful. Once, he yelled at me and I cried. And then, because he made me cry, he cried, too. He kissed me and said, 'I'm sorry.' "

But the few times the staff confronted Evans about cleaning up his act, he protested vehemently. "I don't take drugs!" he'd say, yanking up his sweater sleeves to show that there were no needle marks. The staff sighed collectively and concluded he was in deep denial.

The Clios should have been a financial bonanza for Evans. After operating expenses and salaries for the eleven-person staff, his annual profit was estimated at upwards of $500,000 by company executives. But in 1990 the Clio organization was on increasingly shaky financial ground. In addition to a salary, Evans tapped the company's business accounts to cover personal expenses. The company paid the almost $13,000 monthly mortgage on his Sutton Place town house, and for a second home on Fire Island. Nick Popovich, who examined the balance sheets in the process of buying the Clios, says, "My reaction was it was a privately held company that was being manipulated by the shareholder." Staffers recall that as often as twice weekly financial vice president Julia Naras received phone calls from Evans's bank, reporting that his personal checking account was overdrawn, whereupon Naras would rush to make a deposit.

"For a while we kept track of how much money," says Michael Demetriades, vice president for international affairs. "I think it was $100,000 Julia had to put in his personal account from January to April."

Nancy Ross recalls, "She periodically would say to him, 'Bill, this spending can't keep going on.' " Suppliers who in 1990 had been paid late were demanding to be paid up front in 1991. The staff worried that there might not be any Clio ceremonies.

On the days Evans came to work, "he'd be flying in and out.... You could not understand a word he would say."

The financial crisis was not due entirely to Evans's runaway personal spending. His Hawaii broadcast stations had gone sour; he'd been forced to sell the television property and absorb losses at the radio station. He expected to roll over a $300,000 loan from a private lender in March, but the lender refused and the company suddenly faced a cash crunch.

Just as Evans was in denial about drugs, he seemed blind to the facts of his perilous finances. He'd blithely assure staffers that he'd be receiving a loan any day. But when two loan offers were made by private individuals willing to bail out the company as long as Evans gave up financial control, he rejected both.

By late spring, money was so tight Evans was raising personal cash with a scheme involving American Express and Bloomingdale's. He'd purchase gift certificates at the store with his charge card, then return the next day to redeem them for cash. At other times, he demanded money from Julia Naras for "repairs" on his town house. Naras, a fourteen-year employee, was under tremendous pressure, divided between loyalty to Evans and to the fiscal health of the company. In April, American Express canceled the company's account, which was $40,000 overdue. "One day, when he was crazier than usual," says Ross, "he told Julia, 'You fucking work for me and when I tell you to write out a check you write out a check.' "

Naras said she didn't see how the company could survive. In early May she, Ross, and Demetriades demanded a meeting with Evans. In the ground-floor conference room, Naras began: "Bill, we don't have any money. I don't know what we're going to do. We need a loan." Evans ripped into her, accusing her of squandering company funds. He said he'd hire an independent accountant to audit her.

Nancy Ross, calling his bluff, said, "Bill, why don't you have Julia go upstairs, get the checkbook, and we'll see where the money went."

"No, no, no," Evans said. "That's not important."

"Come on," Ross pressed him. "If you're really perplexed about this, Bill, you could save some money and not hire an independent auditor." She told Naras to go get the checkbook.

Suddenly Evans exploded. He lunged at Naras and violently shook the arm of her chair. "No, no, no, I don't want you touching it!" he shouted. "You Wicked Witch of the West—you made a mess of

it already!" Evans's staff was used to being called names by the boss when he was angry, but, even so, this outburst startled Naras. She seemed close to tears.

"Leave her alone," Demetriades ordered. Evans turned and called Demetriades an asshole. "You're calling me an asshole?" Demetriades said. "You're the asshole. If it wasn't for you we wouldn't be in this mess."

Opposition was all around him. Evans must have felt the need to flee, a sensation every bit as gnawing as a physical craving. He announced he'd go upstairs to his office to get the checkbook himself. "He was gone for about five minutes," says Ross. "He came down without any checkbook, and he said, 'I have to go! I can't stay here anymore! I have an important meeting down at my house. We'll continue this conversation on Monday.' In a huff and a puff and all upset he walked out."

But on Monday there was no further discussion. And by the end of the week there was no money to meet the payroll. Julia Naras quit, along with three junior employees. While a core of staffers stayed on without pay, Evans himself virtually disappeared. "Days and days went by when I couldn't get in touch with him," says Ross. "I'd call down to the house and he wouldn't answer his phone." Evans's continuing downward spiral was all too visible to the neighbors, however. Since he'd thrown out Bradley Wood, a twenty-year-old blond from Boston named Mike Klotz had become his chief companion. The spurned Wood would show up to hammer furiously on the front door, denting and scraping it.

"I'd find drug paraphernalia all over the place," says one staffer. "Glass tubes, strainers, butane lighters. Powder on a desk."

There were the two Clio Awards shows to prepare for. The caterer, the stagehands, and the theater owners were all pressing for payments in advance. Yet at the Clio offices there was not enough money for postage. And U.P.S., owed a huge bill, was refusing to pick up packages. Finally, Ross slipped a letter under Evans's Sutton Place door, warning that it would be impossible to put on a credible show. "Please save the Clios and the value of your company," the letter pleaded. "It must be done now."

On a Wednesday in late May, Evans suddenly appeared at the offices as though nothing were amiss. He breezed past a bay window a member of his entourage had smashed, which remained unrepaired for lack of money. His daughter, Kema Whelan, who worked as the radio-awards coordinator, and Ross did a double take. They followed Evans up to his office. "We need to talk to you," Ross said, opening the door. "Are we having a show or not?"

A look of self-pity crossed Evans's face, and he put his head down on the desk. "Everyone's against me," he moaned. "No one wants to help me."

Whelan, who had watched her father's deterioration over the past two years with a growing lack of tolerance, refused now to offer any sympathy. "What do you mean, no one wants to help you?" she said sarcastically.

"Nancy, I want her out of here," Evans snapped, pointing at the door. But Whelan wouldn't budge. Evans lost his temper and lit into his heavyset daughter. "Get out of my office, you big fat slob!" he shouted. He came around the desk and began to push her toward the door. Whelan pushed back. Then Evans spat at her. Whelan threw a right hook that landed square on her father's jaw.

The fight moved out into the hallway, where other staffers gathered. Evans appeared to trip, and fell on the floor, where he lay breathing heavily. No one offered help. Finally he rose and dusted himself off. The police were called to investigate the fight, and Whelan swore out a complaint against her father. She quit that day. Shortly thereafter almost all the remaining employees walked out.

A week and a half later, on a balmy evening in June, a Clio show of some sort was coming together. The presentation of awards for radio and print ads had been announced long in advance for Manhattan Center Studios, on West Thirty-fourth Street, and sheer momentum was now carrying the evening forward. Men and women in eveningwear arrived at 5:30, but no one from the company was on hand to give them the tickets for which they'd already paid $125. The guests rode the elevators to the seventh-floor auditorium, where rumors swept the room: Bill Evans had fled the country with the ticket money, or he'd been arrested on a drug charge.

At that moment Evans was, in fact, in the Clio offices, dressed in jeans, cowboy boots, and a T-shirt. In the previous days he'd moved into the building, and with his entourage of street kids and other friends he'd tried to cobble together a show. But the disorganization had been mammoth and comical. Slides of winning ads that should have been put in carousels were jumbled hopelessly on the floor. Clothes, towels, and garbage were tossed everywhere.

At ten minutes to eight—more than two hours after the guests had arrived—Evans looked in on Michael Demetriades, the one executive who'd stayed with the company, and asked, "What do you think, should I go down there as I am?" Demetriades had already decided he didn't have the heart to go to what he knew would be a debacle; he'd remained on staff, hand-tabulating the Clio winners, out of loyalty to his friends in the industry. He looked up at the unshaven Evans. "You just might have to do that, seeing that it's ten to eight," he said.

At Manhattan Center an M.C. climbed onstage to calm the crowd. "Please bear with us, please bear with us," he said. "In another fifteen or twenty minutes we'll get going. We have a problem." The M.C. was Don Catterson, the P.R. man and an old friend of Evans's, who ten days earlier had volunteered to help out. As the audience settled into its seats, it became apparent how woefully unprepared Catterson was. Slides of winning ads flashed on-screen upside down or out of focus. Catterson had only a hastily prepared script that omitted such crucial information as the names of winning ad agencies. "Do we have anyone to accept this award?" he'd call out helplessly as a slide appeared. "Does anyone out there know if that's his client?"

The audience laughed nervously. At a second lectern across the stage was an even more unlikely presenter: the evening's caterer, who'd been drafted when no one else from the Clio office showed up. "Hi, I'm Steve, the caterer," he announced. "Care for a Clio?"

Confused audience members broke into conversation. "This is a joke!" someone shouted. People abandoned their seats and wandered around the hall. One New York creative director who was there recalls, "I kept saying to the people I was with, 'You're looking at history here—it's unbelievable. You may see this on television one day or in a movie.' "

Catterson and the caterer, Stephen Pieretti, reached the end of their list of award winners, but as the audience could plainly see, there were still more than eighty unpresented Clios onstage. Nervously, Catterson called an intermission. A knot of angry audience members pressed forward to question him. He admitted he didn't have a list of any more winners and wasn't sure where to find one.

A creative director who was in the group, Tad Dewree, recalls, "Somebody said, 'There are no more awards to be given out.' That triggered somebody else to say, 'This is ridiculous.' And somebody else yelled, 'Fuck it, I'm taking one!' " This gentleman climbed onstage, scooped up two of the fourteen-inch-high Clios, one in each fist, and held them aloft, Rocky-like. The audience laughed and cheered. In the next instant he was joined by twenty-five, then by a hundred men and women surging forward, leaping onto the low stage and shoving one another aside to grab the remaining Clios. "People went berserk," says Dewree. Sometime later, when the mêlée was over, a wraithlike figure with long white hair and a sunken face appeared backstage. Evans had put on a tux after all—apparently he'd swung by Sutton Place to change. "What are you doing?" he croaked in a barely audible voice. "Why have you started the awards?" Pieretti, the caterer, angrily informed him it was past nine o'clock. He offered to go onstage and introduce Evans. "I can't go on. I can't go on," Evans protested, and disappeared through a back door.

The Clio Awards seem destined never to escape the troubled shadow of Bill Evans. In November, after months of tortured negotiations to sell the awards, the deal was still mired in controversy.

Apparently, Evans has been listening less to his lawyers and financial agents than to the coterie of street kids who have installed themselves at 33 Sutton Place. Area doormen report a continuing stream of drop-ins, who sometimes climb through a window when no one answers the door. Evans's lover, Mike Klotz (who now identifies himself as Mike Evans), sits in on meetings where deal points are discussed. When Evans received an interim payment of $10,000 for the Clio trademark from Ruth Ratny, he didn't restore the phone and lights—he bought Klotz a diamond engagement ring.

Fed up, Ratny announced that, as the holder of the trademark, she is the de facto owner of the Clios. But Evans's financial adviser, Wayne Deas, accuses her of trying to hijack the awards, and of reneging on an earlier agreement to pay $2 million for Evans's assets. Ratny's response is that Evans's debts have turned out to equal more than $2 million, and that therefore his assets are worthless. Both sides have threatened to fight on through the courts. Meanwhile, the Manhattan district attorney has launched a fraud investigation into Evans's affairs. As the holder of the trademark, bought for just $10,000, a fraction of what she once promised to pay for the Clios, Ratny is preparing to hold a 1992 competition—*sans* Evans. "We're just going to go forward," she says. She is sending out entry forms and is negotiating with Lincoln Center for a June date.

It's unclear whether the ad industry will participate in force or ignore her while such heavy clouds still blanket the Clios. Ratny's challenge now is public relations—to convince ad agencies she is the new Clio owner.

As for Bill Evans's future, it seems considerably bleaker. As winter settles in, he is still without lights, the heat and hot water have been cut off, and the bank has moved to foreclose on his town house. It's hard to know how long he can last. On my most recent visit to the property, on a cold and blustery day, no one answered my knock, but a young woman who said she lived there stopped to talk on her way up the stoop. She stood with legs crossed, attempting, with one black boot, to conceal a gaping hole in the other boot where her toes stuck out. She told me that Evans had recently fallen down a flight of stairs and badly injured himself. He was now lying in his bedroom, she said. Alone and in the dark. □

A look of self-pity crossed Evans's face, and he put his head down. "No one wants to help me," he moaned.

SITE: CHÂTEAU DE NEUVILLE
COGNAC XO SPECIAL
EXCLUSIVEMENT FINE CHAMPAGNE COGNAC
DEPUIS 1724
REMY MARTIN est l'eau de vie

La belle *Isabelle in Paris.*

Huppert Star

Isabelle Huppert has never insisted that we *like* her on-screen. Throughout her twenty years in film, the thirty-six-year-old French actress has created the most cerebrally rendered gallery of neurotic heroines since Bette Davis—from the teenage parricide in *Violette* to the small-town abortionist in *Story of Women,* both for Claude Chabrol—with a steadfast refusal to play for sympathy. She has teamed with Chabrol again for his current, controversial *Madame Bovary,* and her hard-edged interpretation of Flaubert's legendary adulteress may jolt audiences who remember a melting Jennifer Jones. But, as Huppert notes coolly, "I don't see the interest in rounding angles." —BEN BRANTLEY

Photograph by HELMUT NEWTON

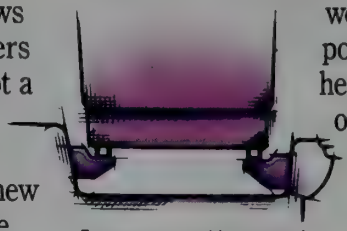
The New York Met's best bet: Hoffman and Corigliano.

Phantoms at the Opera

The Metropolitan Opera will rouse itself from its deep sleep with the world premiere of John Corigliano and William M. Hoffman's *Ghosts of Versailles,* the first contemporary music to be produced there in a quarter of a century. Minimalism does not lift its puny voice in this full-throated treatment of the further adventures of the count and countess and Cherubino as they encounter the French Revolution. Corigliano's music is emotionally generous and not afraid of the big gesture. Hoffman's libretto is witty, touching, and singable. The sublime Teresa Stratas will create Marie Antoinette, while Marilyn Horne has the role of a lifetime as an Egyptian diva, and a genuine show-stopping aria. —TERRENCE McNALLY

Photograph by JOSEF ASTOR

If you happen to be reading this sitting down, relax for a moment. Gently stretch your legs out. That's it. Then spread your elbows and ease your shoulders back. By now you've got a pretty good idea what it feels like to sit in the driver's seat of the all-new 1992 Toyota Camry. We could go to great lengths about how a car a mere nine inches larger on the outside gives you over two feet more room on the inside. How we redesigned the seating position to give you more head room. Curved the back of the front seats to provide more leg room for rear passengers. Or how the new Camry sits (not squeezes) five adults in luxurious comfort. Or that we've redesigned the smallest details to create more space—like integrating Camry's high performance audio speakers into the armrest. Which all adds up to the most spacious and roomy Camry ever. We could even go on about Camry's most comforting feature of all, its legendary reliability. But unfortunately, we've run out of room.



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Très Joely

Few actresses launch movie careers playing their own mother in flashbacks as a lovesick teen, but that's what happened to Joely Richardson, Vanessa Redgrave's younger daughter, in the angst-filled wallow *Wetherby*. Since then, Richardson, twenty-six, has made her own seductive way as temptress to John Goodman in *King Ralph* and Gary Oldman in British TV's *Heading Home*. Peter Greenaway's *Drowning by Numbers* cast her as a lusty murderess, and she coped bravely as the doomed diabetic Shelby in the West End run of *Steel Magnolias*. This month's *Shining Through* finds her befriending Melanie Griffith while they cloak-and-dagger their way through 1940s Germany. But what of the family profession/obsession—acting—which has roped in sister Natasha and cousin Jemma as well? "I suppose it's just the total environment you're brought up in," muses Joely, aware that mama Vanessa had her doubts. "My mother says she wishes we'd been teachers or doctors; they are more help to people." —MATT WOLF

CINDY PALMANO

Joely good: The actress in London.

Night-table Reading

Tony Randall *(actor, director):* Summer, *by Edith Wharton (Berkeley).* *" 'Harney and Charity sat down on a bench made of a board resting on two starch boxes. They faced a door hanging on a broken hinge, and through the crack they saw the eyes of the tow-headed boy and of a pale little girl with a scar across her cheek.' Anyone who can evoke so much with two sentences is a great writer!"*

Lady Bird Johnson *(former First Lady):* Pure & Simple *(Neiman Marcus InCircle). "Proceeds from this marvelous cookbook benefit charities throughout the world."*

Israel Horovitz *(playwright):* The Collected Works of Samuel Beckett *(Grove Press). "I must go on reading Beckett, I can't go on reading Beckett, I'll go on reading Beckett."*

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COSTNER IN CONTROL

With the unlikely success of *Dances with Wolves*, Kevin Costner emerged as a serious power in Hollywood. And now that he's made it to the top, he's determined to play it his way, which may explain why he hooked up with Showtown iconoclast Oliver Stone for his new movie, playing the defiant district attorney Jim Garrison in *JFK*. EDWARD KLEIN reports

Photographs by ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

KEVIN UP

"He understands the clout he has, and he's going to use it."

Not long ago, Kevin Costner and seven of his closest pals went on a fishing trip on the Smith River, near Great Falls, Montana. On the last morning, Costner and Rob Guralnick, vice president of production at Warner Bros., got up early to fly-cast for rainbow trout near a big rock wall. "Kevin hooked a fish and I hooked a fish," says Guralnick, "and we were trying to hold them up for a picture. But these brightly speckled fish were flipping around, and we couldn't get our hands around them, and Kevin dropped his in the water. We were going off the river in a half-hour, and it looked like he'd blown his last chance. He turned to me and said, 'I'm going to get it, I'm going to pick it up.' And I said, 'No way. Impossible!' And he plunged his hand into the icy water and snagged the fish in the current. That's the way Kevin is: he can do anything."

To hear some people tell it, Kevin Costner's Indian name should be Walks on Water. Ever since he became Hollywood's leading leading man, people in the movie capital have been talking about his brilliance as an actor, his technical mastery as a cinematographer, his acumen as a director, his shrewdness as a businessman, his generosity as a friend, his commitment as a husband and father. Yet, when pressed to come up with specific examples, most of these same people are reduced to generalities. The story about Kevin and the fish that didn't get away is anomalous. Genius usually generates colorful anecdotes; Costner does not.

"Just because he's done extraordinary things doesn't mean, definitionally, he's an extraordinary person," explains a major executive in the movie industry who has worked closely with Costner. "He's not interested in art or music or politics or anything. You take him to a good restaurant and he doesn't know what the items are on the menu. He orders a cheeseburger. He's not Al Pacino; there's nothing dark in him. If you were talking about De Niro, I could give you twenty stories. But Kevin's just a haimish guy, if there is such a word for a Gentile."

How could anyone who appears to be so homey and unpretentious have achieved such monumental success? Even Costner isn't sure. "I don't think of myself as the smartest guy in the world, or on the cutting edge," he says. "But I do have a point of view, and in Hollywood that's important. I don't vacillate over my friendships or my tastes. I have a firmness. I won't be tread on. There are things I can do in movies that the audience knows I can do, because they've seen me do it, and then there are things I haven't done yet and will someday do and surprise the shit out of a lot of people."

His green eyes wander across the patio where we are sitting, outside his office on the Warner Bros. lot. He takes a large, thoughtful bite from a pink Hostess Sno Ball and washes it down with a gulp of milk. His legs are crossed at the worn white spot on the knee of his jeans, and his right foot—shod in an old two-tone cowboy boot—pumps in intense concentration. Despite his strong words, he seems unsure of himself.

Costner's life has been turned upside down by his sudden success, and I have heard from one of his closest associates that the actor is going through something of an identity crisis. "Think about it," this person tells me. "You've got a guy who grew up with a pretty normal life, without much money. He wasn't a big man on campus, and he married very early. For a while, he becomes a lowly stagehand. Then, all of a sudden, out of the blue, he wins a bunch of Academy Awards and becomes America's sweetheart, and he's making tons of money, and George Bush is calling him every day to play golf. Every man wants to be his best friend, and every woman wants to lay him. How does a man handle all this in the space of twenty months? I'll tell you. He handles it by not handling it. He's paranoid that he's going to lose everything."

I look over at Costner, who is rubbing his chin and saying, "If any reality has hit me, it's that I have to think about things all the time now, and that's not as enjoyable as just living the moment. I would like to be more fluid."

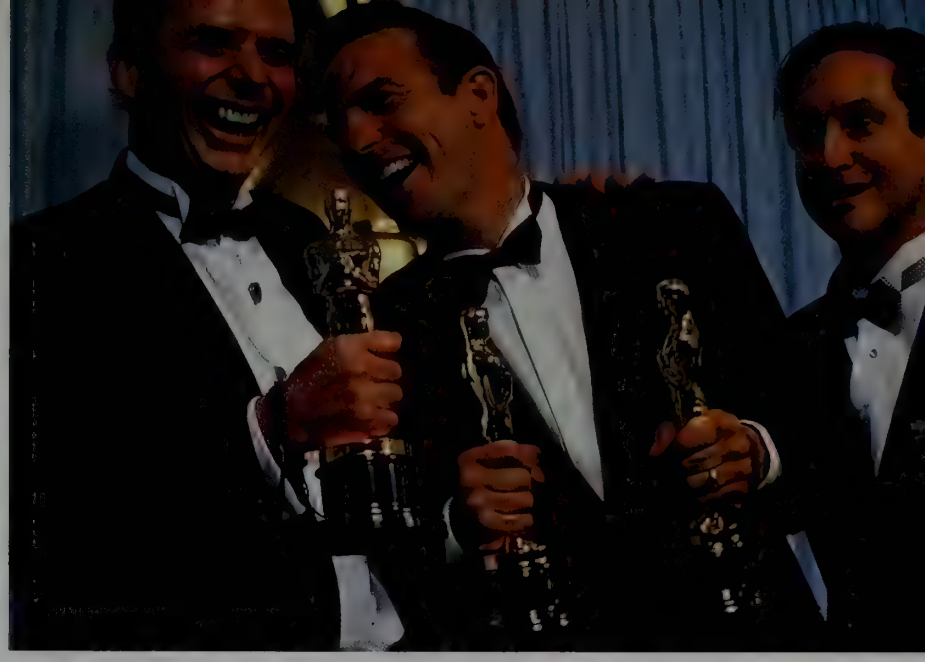
We talk about other actors he admires, and Steve McQueen's name comes up. "You never feel Steve McQueen's character has a mother or father," Costner says. "He just appears on the screen full-blown. He's the enigmatic American, your antihero, the guy who doesn't make it to the big leagues. I identify with Steve McQueen. That's the kind of characters I play. That's me."

Like McQueen, Costner has a naturally powerful physical presence on the screen. "He's very athletic, a real run-and-jump actor," says Caroline Sax, the script supervisor on *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*. "Wherever possible he did his own stunts, stuff that was really quite dangerous." Sean Young, who shot a steamy backseat sex scene with Costner in *No Way Out*, agrees that the actor has a unique ability to focus his energy. "I'm studying riding horses for a Western that I'm shooting," she says, "and I'm in awe of Kevin's riding in *Dances with Wolves*. To be on that horse and shooting the way he did—just the sheer physicality is impressive. But he's also a very serious actor. He used to say, 'We'll do this scene every way possible before we get in front of the camera, and then all the other stuff will be gone.' He'd say, 'Let's do it in fake Chinese,' and we'd start going, 'Ang yang hew choo'—trying to get our meaning across, trying to get to the root of the scene."

Mary McDonnell, the love interest in *Dances with Wolves*, tells me, "He got so excited by the actors' choices, things he hadn't thought of, and he was open to suggestions, to discovering something. . . . In one romantic scene, we were embracing, and there was something he wanted to communicate to me as a director, so during the actual take he whispered directions into my ear, and it was always like that; we'd get lost in who he was—the director or the actor."

"There was no doubt on the set of *JFK* who was directing and who was acting," says Tommy Lee Jones. "Oliver was in charge." In *JFK*, Oliver Stone's gritty new movie, which is scheduled to open Christmas week, Costner plays Jim Garrison, the New Orleans district attorney who in 1968 brought Clay Shaw, a prominent local homosexual, to trial in an effort to prove that President Kennedy was the victim of a conspiracy, and not assassinated by Lee Harvey Oswald acting alone, as the Warren Commission had concluded.

"Let's face it, the public can only take this good-guy story about me for just so long."



KEVIN'S SEVEN

Costner with screenwriter Michael Blake and co-producer Jim Wilson at the 1991 Academy Awards, when *Dances with Wolves* took seven Oscars.

"Kevin makes things look awfully easy," says Jones, who plays Shaw. "That's why people like his work so much. I know Kevin had some moments of doubt when his character's speeches started running one and two pages long in the final courtroom scene. But I was there throughout that scene, and I had to go to the telephone and call my wife and agent to rave about what Kevin had done. When his Garrison character summarizes the political position of the movie, Kevin really hit the nail on the head. He describes for the audience the consequences and implications of tolerating a cover-up of an assassination of a president. It brought the movie together for me."

Along with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Tom Cruise, Costner is one of the three biggest marquee names in the world today. Some people think he is more than that, and compare him to the great movie stars of the past, actors audiences trusted to carry the message of the American Dream. They say that Kevin Costner has that same special magic, that same natural, effortless quality, that made Spencer Tracy, Gary Cooper, and James Stewart great stars.

Costner has a different perception of his stardom. "People just don't fucking get it," he says. "It's all in the script. If you have a great script, you'll attract great actors, you'll get great directors. I usually don't pick a script unless there are three or four roles I'd be willing to play myself. That way I know the movie will attract world-class actors."

"Kevin got lucky with *Field of Dreams,*" says a Hollywood executive, "and now he thinks he's a cinematic genius. Kevin has no great genius in picking scripts. Just look at *Revenge;* it was a dog. But I'll tell you what he knows better than any other actor, with the possible exception of Dustin. He knows what he can play and what audiences want to see him do. That's his genius."

"The one thing that Kevin has is truth," says Wally Nicita, the producer, who discovered Costner ten years ago, when she was a casting director. "People believe that everything he says and does *he* believes is true, so he makes it true for them."

"If I were judging it, I'd say that Kevin Costner isn't evanescent—he's going to last," says Frank Price, the former head of Columbia Pictures, who has been a top-seeded player in Hollywood for more than fifteen years. "After watching Costner in *Bull Durham,* my reaction was, Boy, he's got the kind of strength Gable had. I haven't seen that in years. If you were remaking *Gone with the Wind,* I'd cast Costner. He's the one person who's got the strength to do Gable's role."

Everyone agrees that Costner displays amazing determination in a business that can wither the hardiest ego. He labored line by line for more than two years on the script of *Dances with Wolves,* which bears his personal stamp from beginning to end and for which he raised the initial financing from foreign sources. He then ignored the objections of several major studios and refused to cut out the Sioux subtitles. When it looked as though he was going to run overbudget and the studio sent insurance bondsmen to the set, Costner offered to forfeit half of his $5 million salary in order to help.

During the shooting of *Dances,* some of the Indian actors failed to learn their lines or had to be taught how to shoot with a bow and arrow. "I reminded them that this was a project about their people, that if it didn't turn out, *they'd* be embarrassed, not me," Costner told Elaine Dutka, who covers the film industry for the *Los Angeles Times.* "I warned them that if they were cavalier with my time, there had better be a good reason."

"His work ethic is gargantuan," Rob Guralnick tells me. "He works harder than anybody I've ever known. He proved it with *Dances.* While everybody in Hollywood was snickering, he was out there just concerned with keeping his eye on the ball. It was like being in a cage with people banging on the bars. But he never stopped."

At each stage of his career, Costner has shrewdly used his time on the set to learn the complex business of filmmaking. His part may have been cut from *The Big Chill,* but he made friends with director Larry Kasdan and studied his camera-placement technique. *Revenge,* directed by Tony Scott, ran into trouble—a case of too many cooks—but it

taught Costner the importance of having control over a project. When things went wrong on the set of *Robin Hood,* which Costner had agreed to do partly as a favor to his friend Kevin Reynolds, the director, he chose to help salvage the movie by supporting the producers' decision to push Reynolds aside.

"Kevin Reynolds was essentially told to distance himself," recalls Doug Milsome, the director of photography on *Robin Hood*. "When I tried to get into the cutting room to color-grade the picture, I was never able to see all of it. They—whoever 'they' were—wouldn't let me. But Costner was in the cutting room, playing with his part, putting more close-ups of himself in, which Reynolds had left out."

Costner doesn't have a star's entourage—no personal lawyer, business manager, or press agent. He drives a Ford Mustang during the week, a four-wheel-drive Bronco on weekends. He lives in a working-class town near untrendy Pasadena in a big, sprawling pink hacienda that was designed and decorated by Cindy Costner, his wife of thirteen years. They also have a condo in the High Sierras and a beach house in Santa Barbara. The Costners have three kids—two daughters and a son—and Kevin brings them to the office, where they draw pictures with Crayolas and show them to Daddy for his approval. He talks to his father almost every day.

Costner bridles at the suggestion that he's just some Orange County Republican, a hunk of white bread who got lucky in the movies. "I registered as a Republican when I was twenty-one," he says. "My parents were Republicans. But as I've gotten older I've questioned my whole conservative background. You could say that I have a playground mentality, meaning I think you should be fair about how you treat people."

Stories of his generosity abound. On the set of *Dances,* the husband of his hairdresser suddenly died; Costner bought the coffin and paid for the transportation of the body back to Atlanta. During *Robin Hood,* one of the crew had to collect money to pay the medical expenses for his desperately ill child. "Kevin told him whatever money he raised, he would double it," says Caroline Sax, the script supervisor. "And he was not doing that to impress anybody."

"Mike Ovitz has been on my case to get into better physical shape for *The Bodyguard,*" says Costner, referring to his next film, which will co-star Whitney Houston. "But I'm not disciplined in that way."

"What do you do to keep in shape?" I ask.

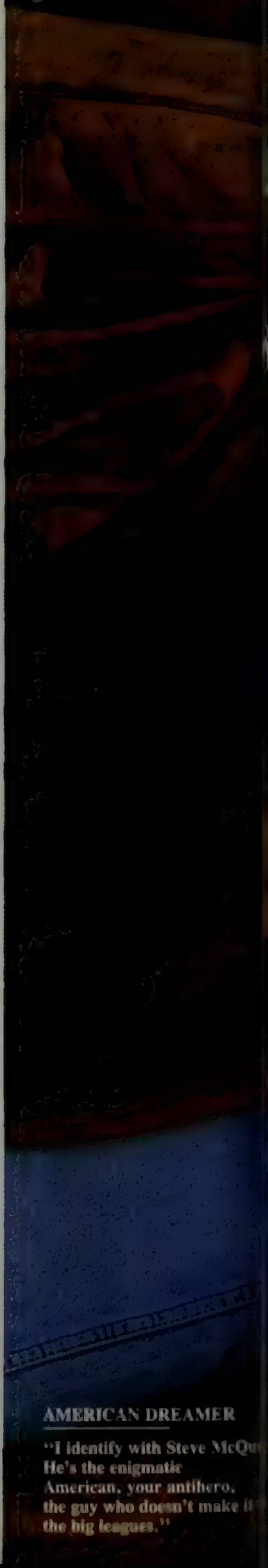
"Nothing," he says.

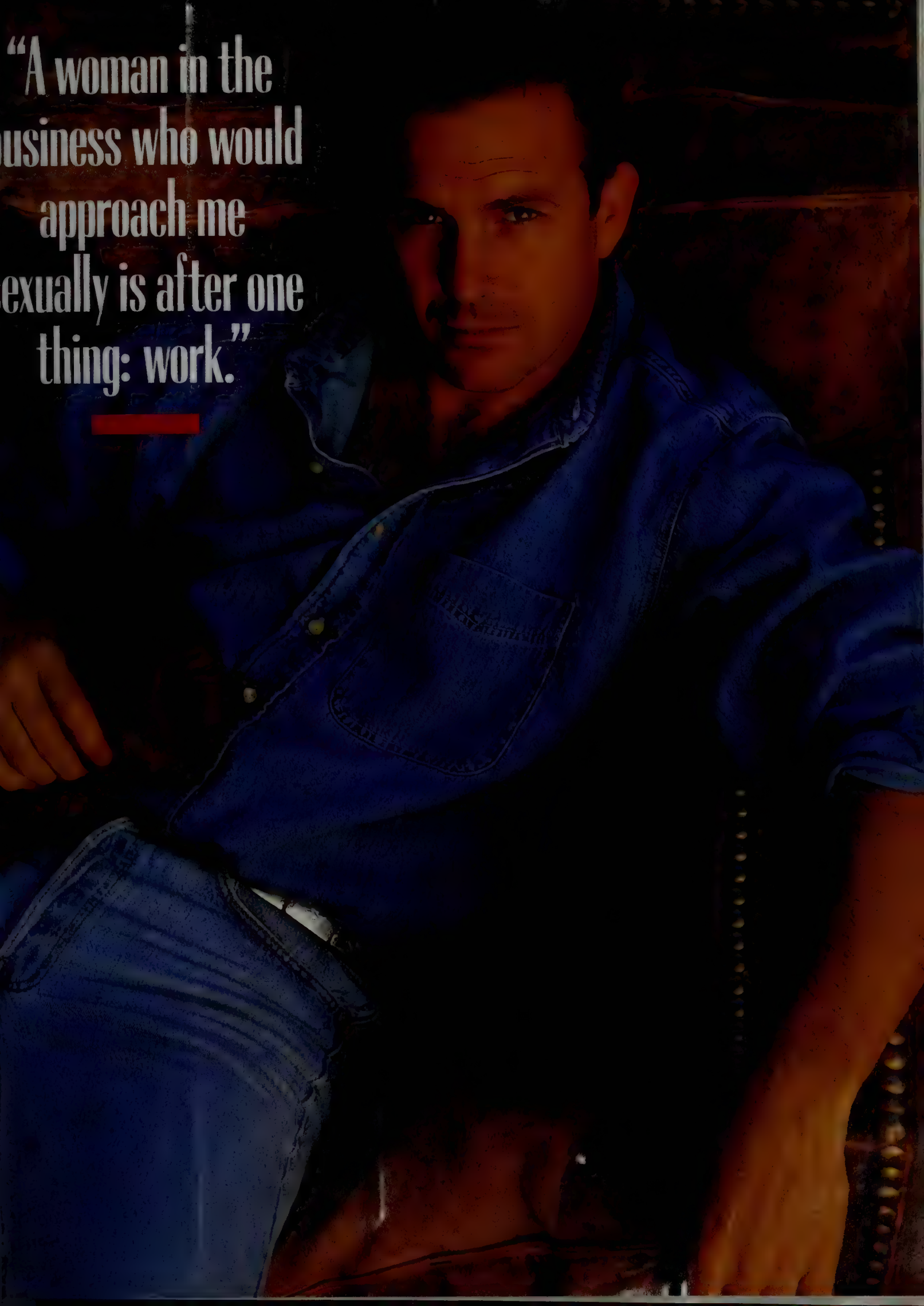
"You must do *something,*" I say. "Swim, jog, lift weights?" He shakes his head no, proud of the fact that he's not into his body.

On the other hand, Costner is typical of many actors in the sense that facts are less important than something he calls "emotional truth." This touchy-feely attitude conveniently permits him to avoid dealing with the criticism that his movies are "politically correct" statements in which noble Native Americans or civilized Muslims always seem to be exalted over brutish white Western males. As *The New Republic* once put it, a Costner character seems as though he "can no longer bear his whiteness."

So let Madonna retch over his jejune appearance in *Truth or Dare;* let critics kvetch over his "bland megalomania" (Pauline Kael in *The New Yorker*), his "Prince of Sanctimony" movie roles (Tom Shales in *The Washington Post*), his "tiresome thirtysomething earnestness and smugness" (Maureen Dowd in *The New York Times*). As far as Costner is concerned, everybody's missing the point: audiences respond to the story lines in his movies.

For *Dances,* whose global box-office and video sales are approaching a half-billion dollars, Costner won seven Academy Awards, including best director, and the respect of the Hollywood community, not least because, as *Variety* has put it, Costner's "eventual payout should approach the $50 million earned by Jack Nicholson on *Batman.*" Now, on the heels of *Robin Hood,* which has passed the $300 million mark and made Costner a popcorn idol all over the world, he seems to be taking another one of *(Continued on page 131)*




"A woman in the
usiness who would
approach me
exually is after one
thing: work."

Lithe Spirit

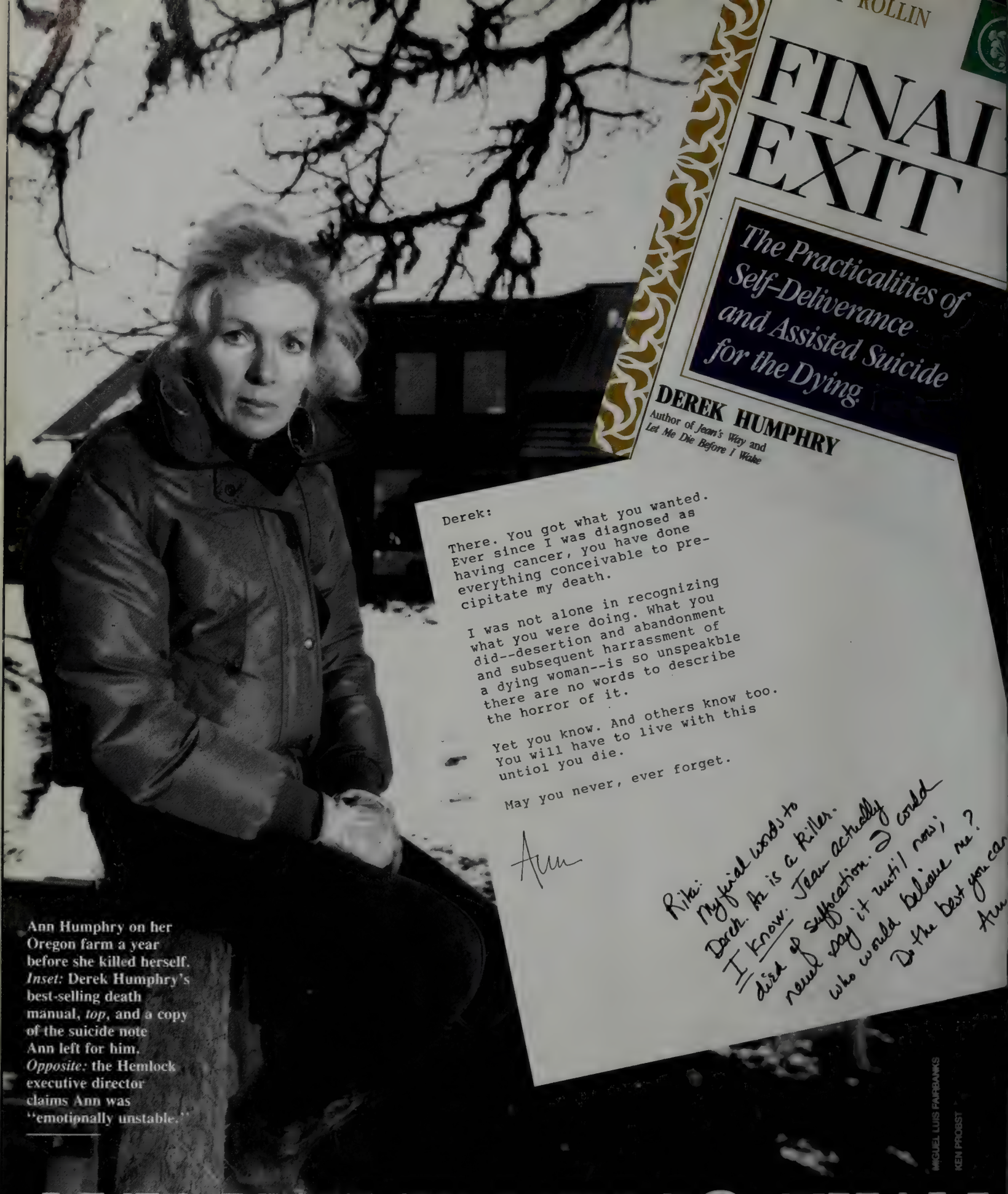
She arrives for dinner all asparkle these days, like the sassy gold faucets on her new Moschino jacket, having just been given a "really fab" reception in Paris, where she danced in three galas of *étoiles*. At twenty-two, England's Darcey Bussell has rocketed into the international firmament and is impatient to extend her horizon. "I love the idea of guesting. It really boosts you when you go to other companies and see their amazing dancers." But the Royal Ballet is giving her every incentive to stay. The directors invited the dashing young Hungarian Zoltan Solymosi to join the company—especially for her. This month they will dance together in *The Nutcracker* for the first time, and in February they make their debuts in *Manon* (a ballet Bussell was taken out of recently because her Russian partner, Irek Mukhamedov, found her too tall). She still appears with Mukhamedov in Kenneth MacMillan's *Winter Dreams*, the ballet which proclaimed her coming-of-age as a performer. The girl-next-door freshness has not dimmed, but there is a new sophistication in her dancing, which has grown with her success. After a series of triumphant performances in the U.S. last summer, Bussell returned "shining and brightening," as Solymosi puts it, with greater confidence and *joie de vivre*. Since then she has been lapping up the trappings of her acclaim—her first apartment, a flashy new jeep. She knows she has the whole world pinioned by the point of her *tendu*, yet she has remained disarmingly popular and fun to be with—wowing the room at parties with her abandon on the dance floor. "She's like a black woman," remarks a friend, "with this wonderful bluesy way of moving"—a legacy of her early show-biz schooling. Bussell's freedom of spirit is gratifyingly infectious. Through her example, British ballet is at last loosening its stays and flinging native propriety to the winds. —JULIE KAVANAGH

Photograph by ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

STYLED BY EVYAN METZNER; HAIR AND MAKEUP BY MARIA VERIEL; DRESS BY CAROLYNE ROEHM

DARCEY BUSSELL

She has rocketed into the international firmament.



Ann Humphry on her Oregon farm a year before she killed herself. *Inset:* Derek Humphry's best-selling death manual, *top*, and a copy of the suicide note Ann left for him. *Opposite:* the Hemlock executive director claims Ann was "emotionally unstable."

MIGUEL LUIS FARRANKS
KEN PROBST

ANN HUMPHRY'S FINAL

EXIT

Will Ann Humphry's suicide derail the right-to-die crusade of the Hemlock Society, which she co-founded with her then husband, Derek Humphry, the author and "self-deliverance" guru? CAL McCRYSTAL reports on the last days of the woman whose death echoed haunting patterns set by Humphry's first wife and by her own parents, and followed the bitter breakup of her marriage

At 12:30 P.M. on Wednesday, October 2, Ann Humphry made a last, long-distance call from Windfall Farm, twenty-five miles northwest of Eugene, Oregon. In Los Angeles, Julie Horvath, a friend of Ann's, picked up the phone.

"Julie? Can you talk? It's very important."

Horvath, who runs a training course for helicopter pilots, shooed her student from the room. "Yeah, go ahead," she said.

"Julie," Ann Humphry said, "this is it. I'm checking out."

Horvath knew what those words meant: her friend was going to kill herself, surrender to two years of physical and mental anguish—mitigated by periods of extraordinary happiness—which began when her husband, Derek Humphry, walked out on her. Derek, executive director of the National Hemlock Society, was fast becoming known as America's "guru to the dying." Now Ann herself was preparing to carry out the organization's credo of "death with dignity."

Horvath, who had been with Ann at the farm only the day before, was stunned by her friend's words and struggled for her own. "What happened?" she managed to ask. Just that morning, Ann said, her attorneys had withdrawn from a $6.5 million lawsuit she had brought against Derek and Hemlock alleging that they had defamed her. "I just can't go on," Ann told her in a voice Horvath remembered later as quite calm.

Horvath tried to dissuade her, but Ann was firm. The conversation stopped and started, and both began to cry. "Where exactly are you going? When...?" Horvath asked.

"I can't tell you that."

"Ann, I love you very much."

"I know. I love you too. Promise me you will fly up and see my son and you will tell him. And promise me you'll tell Rick also." Then they said good-bye.

Ann Humphry saddled one of her three horses and led him into the trailer hitched to her pickup. She drove a hundred miles east, to the Three Sisters Wilderness Area, and parked the truck in a stand of trees. Mounting the gelding, she rode up a trail for several miles, then turned into dense forest. She unharnessed the horse, leaving him to wander free (he was later found by a riding party), and carried her tack to a tree, where she sat down and, leaning against her English saddle, opened up her bottles of pills.

Ann was still under the tree, lying in a fetal position, when the county sheriff's men found her six days later.

On the surface at least, it was hard to understand why forty-nine-year-old Ann Humphry would take her own life. She had only recently *defied* death, surviving a bout with breast cancer, and friends noticed that she had begun to revive as well from the emotional wreckage of her divorce from Derek. Even stranger, however, was the eerie pattern her suicide seemed to trace, for Ann was the second of Derek Humphry's wives to meet a pre-arranged death. Sixteen years ago Humphry helped his first wife, Jean, to commit suicide as she lay dying of breast cancer. The book he wrote about the experience, *Jean's Way*, quickly became a mainstay of the nascent right-to-die movement. Celebrity followed with other books, lectures, the Hemlock Society—and money poured in.

Once an undistinguished, even dour London reporter, Humphry was transformed overnight into a font of radical enlightenment. He had hit upon a profoundly sensitive issue, and his beliefs were taken up by his followers and projected, as if onto a giant screen, for all the world to see. Those who had known him in his former life, myself included, now saw a changed man. With astonishing rapidity Humphry came to regard his actions as having a hugely magnified significance; like many a revolutionary before him, his ethos and his ego seemed to fuse.

On the very day Ann left Windfall Farm for good, Humphry was being taped by a British telèvision crew, signing copies of his new best-seller, *Final Exit*, in a bookstore promotion, and prophesying that legalized euthanasia would be a "tremendous influence across the world." Dressed in a gray suit, striped shirt, and blue tie, Humphry was surrounded by copies of what he calls his "workshop manual," some opened to chapter headings: "Bizarre Ways to Die"; "Self-Deliverance via the Plastic Bag"; "How Do You Get the Magic Pills?"

Reviewing the TV report later, I am struck by his aspect—he could easily be a tonsured English priest. Deep Somerset tones solemnize his diction as he speaks of "a step-by-step method on how to die." The face is humorless. I detect around the mouth a certain tension; in the eyes, a certain wariness. He is not at all as I remember him. I am reminded of something Ann Humphry once said: "He gets tremendous validation [from his public]. There are all these Derek Humphry groupies everywhere. He loves traveling because he can talk and talk and talk about Jean and Jean's dying, and he becomes a hero. . . . He has referred to himself as a cult hero and to *Jean's Way* as a cult classic."

On learning that Ann's attorneys had resigned from her suit against him, Derek had turned to his newest bride and said, "This is not good news for Ann." When he learned of Ann's death, he added, "But I didn't imagine it would go this far." Indeed, they hadn't spoken for some time, according to observers. But in Eugene, it was well known that Ann had believed Derek wished her dead so that he could be rid of her forever, and that he had vehemently denied it. A half-page ad he placed in *The New York Times* several weeks after her suicide, describing her as "dogged by emotional problems," seemed an attempt to clarify the circumstances of her death and to erase any lingering suspicions about his moral culpability. The eulogy, signed by Humphry, was effusive yet somehow equally dispassionate: "A woman of Nordic beauty, enormous talent, huge generosity, a gourmet cook, and often wonderful company, at other times her depressions were so serious that she had to be hospitalized." The ad also took pains to point out that Hemlock does not endorse "suicide for reasons of depression."

I had visited them both, already estranged, in Eugene in early 1990, seeking to understand the violent rift that had occurred between two people so dedicated to the controversial goals of the Hemlock Society and, it had long appeared, to each other. Ann was ex-

tremely distraught at her husband's departure, and the manner of it—he had left his good-bye on their answering machine—and she had checked herself into the psychiatric ward of an Oregon hospital for several weeks before my arrival. But she also filed her suit against Derek, charging him with intentional infliction of emotional distress and defamation of character, for describing her as mentally ill. For his part, Derek made it clear he wanted Ann removed from the Hemlock board, and instructed that the locks be changed to keep her out of the offices. Once she was off the board, he had Hemlock's attorneys draw up a "confidentiality agreement," which would forbid Ann to speak about the organization's affairs. She refused to sign it.

If Ann could not let go, Derek, it seems, was already somewhere over the horizon. He later told the London *Daily Telegraph*, "I left her because she was emotionally unstable, not because she had had a brush with cancer." She had soured him on the relationship; the passion had waned and so he felt no compunction about leaving. When I spoke to him, he didn't sound worried about the pain it would cause Ann to learn that he was already involved with another woman—one whose family owned a farm near Ann's. He had had a mistress in another city for five years before that, he explained, adding, "That shows the pitiful state of the marriage."

As Ann was putting her final plans into motion, Derek was busier than ever at Hemlock, spearheading a campaign to legalize euthanasia in Washington State. (The measure failed a month later.) He was also getting settled into his new life, having married the farmer's daughter, thirty-eight-year-old Gretchen Crocker, in May 1990. The couple had moved to a timber-walled two-bedroom house in the hills outside Eugene. *Final Exit* was being trumpeted as a likely Hollywood property, and there were 250,000 new copies of *Jean's Way* in print, targeted at the mass market. (Humphry's New York literary agent, Robert Ducas, recently told *Variety* that he had turned down two serious television inquiries about *Jean's Way* because he wants a feature.)

The law in most places currently prohibits euthanasia, but the First Amendment protects the publication of how-to manuals such as *Final Exit* and the Hemlock Society's numerous case studies of "auto-euthanasia"—or mercy-killing oneself. One Hemlock publication claims that about 80 percent of Americans support passive euthanasia (pulling the plug) and that about 60 percent support auto-euthanasia. "The credo of Hemlock is that auto-euthanasia should be non-violent, painless and bloodless. It ought also to be aesthetic enough to be carried out in the presence of loved ones and to give them a chance to say goodbye." (The leaflet warns against certain methods—cyanide, for instance, which "has been likened to your blood boiling.")

Needless to say, Hemlock is perpetually losing members, but, Humphry explained to me, "we advertise. . . . Our girls take a steady stream of calls" on the group's toll-free number. Tragically, AIDS has been a boon, bringing many more young people into the movement. "[AIDS] changed the face of our organization," said Humphry. "Up to 1984–85 we were an organization of elderly, gray-haired ladies.

"We don't ask people what they're dying of—that would appear to be snooping," he added. Asked if he ever got fed up with the campaign, he answered emphatically: "No. . . . I won't stop until I've made change. . . . I will go on writing about it, shouting about it. Put it this way: I won't shut up until the law is changed."

I first met Humphry in the 1970s, when he was a reporter on *The Sunday Times* of London, writing about race relations. He was balding, lugubrious, industrious, and deadly dull—despite a high-pitched giggle. He was older and more waxen than most of his colleagues, "the epitome of suburban respectability," one reporter recalls. Another summons up the image of a man "who didn't

"The harassment [of Ann], the lack of compassion, the lack of decency: the man was vicious."

Above: Ann helped Derek write the book that launched his crusade. *Right:* the couple on their wedding day in 1976.

sparkle or womanize." Then came the astonishment as he achieved sudden notoriety with *Jean's Way*, in which he described bringing, by prior agreement, the mother of their three children a mug of lethally spiked coffee on her breakfast tray one sunny day in 1975.

A few months later, after answering a personals ad in a paper, Humphry met a young woman from Boston named Ann Wickett, a student at the Shakespeare Institute in Birmingham. "It was strong love at first sight," he told me. "I remember you were the first one in the office to see us together." In fact, it had struck me as a touch insensitive that the widower was able to apply himself almost immediately to the zealous pursuit of female company. But he told me that Jean had given him permission to remarry. "Don't forget," he said, "I'd known for a good year that Jean was dying. . . . You've done a lot of thinking about what's going to happen [afterward]."

He and Ann were married the next year, and wrote *Jean's Way* together during a protracted honeymoon. They moved to America, to a house in Los Angeles. Humphry was exuberant: "The golden immigrant! What more could you expect? Ann gave me the legal status: a new wife, a new life!"

He was unconcerned about the threat of prosecution for Jean's death. "I could have got up to fourteen years in prison," he said, "but I was very careful in preparing *Jean's Way*. I spent a lot of time in the library, with law books," and once finished writing he destroyed all his notes. Some felt, however, that Humphry could still be charged with "making a buck out of his wife's death," in the words of one acquaintance. Indeed, for the first time his colleagues got a glimpse of a trait Humphry would later exhibit full-blown: an earnest, unapologetic self-centeredness. One saw it in the pages of *Jean's Way*, where the author's maudlin description of his own torment and his escape from it seems to all but eclipse the predicament of his wife.

Ducas, Humphry's agent, reportedly said, "It's the most tasteless thing I've ever read in my life. But it will make a fortune." He was right. Derek and Ann Humphry had effectively launched an industry of death dealing; he made his rounds of interviews and television talk shows, and in 1980 they concentrated their efforts under the umbrella of the tax-exempt Hemlock Society. Ann chose the name.

Hemlock seems to have survived the death of the woman who christened it. Many observers say Derek was clearly always the driving force, and he is a skilled chief executive: membership has risen steadily, and is up by more than 10,000, to 45,000, since the couple's divorce.

Humphry with his all-female staff and a visitor at the Eugene offices of the Hemlock Society.

He has also been largely successful at damage control. Jean Gillett, Hemlock's treasurer, says Humphry made a visit to her home in Eugene shortly after he left his wife. "He came over and just broke down completely, saying, 'Here, *I've* gotten all you people into all these problems,' " Gillett recalls, adding that she always found Ann's personality "disagreeable," while Derek "tried to be smooth, and always of an even disposition."

Henry Brod, a local Hemlock official whom Humphry fired over a policy disagreement, does not share Gillett's opinion. "The harassment [of Ann], the lack of compassion, the lack of decency: the man was vicious. None of us liked what was going on, but we didn't let that interfere" with the group's work. According to Brod, "Whatever Derek says is fine" with the Hemlock board. "He's not on the board, he's executive director, but whatever he says they do. And he attends all meetings and dictates everything that goes on." Brod claims Derek met with each board member before the January 1990 meeting, at which Ann was voted out. "[He] told them, 'Ann's crazy—she's mentally deranged, poor thing.' They always trusted Derek."

The residents of Monroe, the community nearest Windfall Farm, are more suspicious. "If Derek had come [to Monroe] after Ann's death, he'd have gone out in a box," says Pam Wilson, who runs the local feedstore. "The people blamed him because of the things he was saying to the media, that Ann was mentally ill, that she was unstable."

"Ann did not commit suicide out of impulse," insists Julie Horvath. "It was a long, two-year battle. She was stripped of everything—her dignity." Horvath, who was Ann's riding instructor when they first met, joined Hemlock, then dropped her membership when Ann was ousted. "I just hope and pray that people will see what Derek is about, that they'll wake up and see what Hemlock stands for," she says. "Hemlock failed miserably. If they couldn't be there for a cofounder, they're not going to be there for the little guy."

Rita Marker, who runs an Ohio-based group called the International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force, had frequently debated the subject of "mercy killing"

with Derek before the marriage ruptured. "We started the task force in 1987 because there was no visible opposition to euthanasia." Over the years, she says, "Ann indicated to me, and to others, that she had changed her viewpoint entirely as to the legalization of euthanasia. It was something she had not been aware of before being diagnosed as having cancer. She realized what pressure there already was on people to die and get out of the way; to legalize euthanasia would only add to that pressure."

Rita Marker calls Derek Humphry "a monster," because "he used his first wife's death and now his second wife's death to further his agenda."

Some suspect the key to Derek's behavior may lie submerged in his own unhappy past. He is described by several women who came into contact with him as a person who openly sought sympathy and comfort during his troubles with Ann, yet Derek's hallmark has always been his ability to move on, seemingly impervious to the ravages of catastrophe and loss. He is a survivor, but not a healer, and he has learned to elevate that condition into an all-consuming vocation.

It was only after becoming truly famous as the boss of Hemlock and guru to the dying that Humphry seemed relaxed enough for confidences. I then learned that the man who left Ann Humphry was once abandoned himself. He was about four years old and the woman who bolted was his mother.

He was born on April 29, 1930, to an Irish model from Cork who had two sons—first Garth and then Derek—with a traveling salesman in Bath, Somerset. "Life fell apart almost immediately for me," Humphry said. "I think [they] were both tearaways—they loved life.

"My father got custody of the two boys, and she was much upset, so I gather, and took off for Australia," he continued. A few years after the divorce his father spent a year in jail for fraud, and the two brothers were shifted around among relatives in Bristol. They were told he had gone away on "a business trip."

His mother married an Australian and resurfaced only a few times after that, when her sons were young adults. Then she left their lives forever.

> "There was so much death. Derek was working like a fiend on it all the time."

Ann and Bill, her biological son, on the Oregon coast in August 1991, two months before her death.

"The last two years were a lot of trouble, but I really thought Ann had gained a good deal of ground," says her cousin Nancy Raymo, puzzling through the reasons for Ann's suicide. "She had a gentleness and a caring that made her very vulnerable." Although chemotherapy had left her exhausted, frequent checkups for breast cancer revealed that she was, at least for the moment, in the clear. Ann lost confidence, however, in late 1990, when she underwent surgical reconstruction of her left breast, was unhappy with the results, and went back for a second operation. Raymo, who talked to her at the time, says, "I have never heard such despair in my entire life. She was sobbing and said, 'I have been completely butchered.' And then she had to go through recovery alone. And the legal fights [with Derek] were still going on, and she had this fear of running out of money and not being able to support herself."

Yet again Ann Humphry recovered and sought to renew her grip on life. Last January, two things happened which were to give her strength. A new man entered her life, Rick Urbanski, a physician at Eugene's Sacred Heart General Hospital. Soft-spoken and intense, Urbanski was a self-described city boy who was enchanted with Ann's knowledge of farming and animals. She invited him to Windfall Farm, and, he says, they began a relationship. "Ann and I were lovers."

The second happy event was the rediscovery of Ann Humphry's biological son, Robert William Stone, a twenty-three-year-old fine-arts student at Montreal's Concordia University, who grew up in Toronto with his adoptive parents. Two years ago, Bill told them he wished to meet his birth parents; an adoption-disclosure agency helped him find Ann, and she told him the story of her life, and of his beginnings.

She was the younger of two daughters born in Boston to Arthur and Elizabeth Kooman. The family was fairly wealthy (Arthur was a banker), conformist, and respected. She was sent to a boarding school run by nuns in Tennessee, then went on to Boston University. By the time she embarked on a master's degree in Toronto, Ann Kooman was a sheltered, introspective young woman, a voracious reader with little knowledge of the real world. When she fell for another student—named Arthur, like her father—she fell hard. And when she got pregnant and he didn't want to marry, she broke into pieces.

The pieces were picked up by Tom Wickett, a lawyer who helped her put the child up for adoption. Nancy Raymo describes their subsequent marriage as apparently one of "convenience"; it lasted only a year, as the young mother continued to grieve over her lost son and sought in vain the comfort of her censorious parents. Toward the end

of her life, Ann Humphry talked to friends about those years. During her marriage to Tom Wickett, she "attempted suicide and was institutionalized for several months because of that," says Rita Marker. "Ann did not in any way attempt to keep that a secret."

Her pregnancy "was a family shame," says Ann's cousin. "[Her parents] didn't want their friends to know. They were very angry with her. Even though she'd been assured her baby had gone to a good home, she always worried about her decision." When the adoption-disclosure agency contacted her last January, she could hardly contain her joy and relief. "When she got his first letter, she cried and cried and cried," says Julie Horvath. "Bill's arrival [at Windfall Farm] was the one thing she'd been hanging in for."

When Bill came to Windfall Farm last summer, says Raymo, "within twenty-four hours they were finishing one another's sentences. Bill just felt like he'd found his soul mate. They had a wonderful ten days."

Ann and Bill went camping in the Three Sisters Wilderness Area. "She was so happy," says Bill. "We spent a lot of time just talking and talking. We caught up with each other's lives."

Ann told her son about the book she was trying to write, despite its rejection by at least one literary agent. She planned to title it *Hemlock Unraveled,* and described it as a philosophical narrative on where she believed Hemlock had strayed from the path embarked upon in 1980. Ann Humphry still believed in the principle of "self-deliverance," but now she felt that it would almost certainly encounter difficulties in practice: the sheer momentum of the Hemlock machine might trundle over fragile personal emotions, she said; the powerful group psychology of the organization could strip the individual of his ability to choose. "The book was semi-autobiographical," Bill says. "It wasn't about Derek. . . . The fact was she'd been victimized, and hated the idea of me regarding her as a victim. . . . She said that when she survived this she wanted to tell her own story. . . . Instead of spending all this time on death, [she wanted to spend] time on just getting the farm going. I mean, there was so much death. Derek was working like a fiend on it all the time, but she was pulling away. She was getting tired of death."

If Derek Humphry claimed his wife could be "a perfect bitch," he wasn't the only person who found Ann Humphry contentious and difficult to deal with. Her attorneys withdrew from the suit she was bringing against her ex-husband because they found her repeated interference with their handling of the case intolerable. It appears that this event severed her will to live. Yet Ann was stalked by other demons—Rick Urbanski says Humphry's abandonment "hurt her very, very deeply." She also worried about a recurrence of cancer. And her closest friends say that Ann never got over her remorse about her parents and the manner of their death in 1986.

It was four years after Humphry had published *Let Me Die Before I Wake,* case studies of self-deliverance, from which, as he later put it, "thousands of dollars poured in." His parents-in-law, *(Continued on page 141)*

SPOTLIGHT

I Remember Mambo

Oscar Hijuelos had his dancing shoes on when he wrote *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love*—the drumbeat of his prose pulsated through the floor like an all-night party. Its title trimmed to *The Mambo Kings* to fit on the marquee, Hijuelos's Pulitzer Prize–winning novel will soon shake its money-maker across the big screen. Conga lines! Ruffled sleeves! Producer-director Arne Glimcher aims to rattle loose "the release of endorphins that is the spirit of mambo." He intends the movie to be a learning lesson too. He has a bitter pill to impart, describing *The Mambo Kings* as a fable about "reaching for the American Dream and watching it go up in smoke." Luckily, he's lassoed a cast capable of cutting through this Grim Awakening. Once a smoldering lover-boy, Armand Assante achieved a hawklike profile in *The Marrying Man* and *Q&A.* As Cesar, he tears it up onstage with salsa great Tito Puente. Still a smoldering lover-boy, Antonio Banderas made Madonna's heart go pitty-pat as the star of Almodóvar's *Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!* As Cesar's brother, Nestor, he keeps the home fires burning with Maruschka Detmers, who was a mouthful in *The Devil in the Flesh.* Applying cruel lipstick, Cathy Moriarty is the platinum armpiece Lanna Lake. In a nostalgic nod to *I Love Lucy,* Desi Arnaz Jr. appears as his bandleader dad. Draped in gold lamé, dolled up with sequins, *The Mambo Kings* returns you to a time when people *dressed.* Message aside, its slick moves should dazzle.

—JAMES WOLCOTT

Photograph by FIROOZ ZAHEDI

THE MAMBO KINGS

"The release of endorphins that is the spirit of mambo."

HOPE AND GLORIA

Writing her new book, "I began to understand with a terrible clarity that we teach what we need to learn."

Photograph by ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

Deconstructing Gloria

What price did Gloria Steinem pay to become the face of American feminism? She is just now beginning to understand that behind the public battles of the women's movement she was burying pain and an almost crippling lack of self-esteem. But now she is ready to redress it all in her frank new book, *Revolution from Within*.

LESLIE BENNETTS reports

Well manicured and well modulated, the lunchtime crowd at the Four Seasons hums discreetly with the usual heady mixture of business and gossip. Only the barest flick of an eye betrays interest as each new arrival is checked out by the power brokers already at their seats. But when a tall, frazzled-looking woman hurries over to my table, there is not so much as a glimmer of recognition from anyone in the vicinity. Indeed, as she struggles out of her coat, even I do a double take: who is this pleasant-looking matron, with her brown jacket and brown pants and mousy brownish hair pulled back into what looks suspiciously like a bun? Although I've known her for nearly twenty years, it is several long moments before I realize that the nondescript brown wren in front of me is one of the most famous women in the country, not to mention my tardy lunch date, Gloria Steinem. The last time I saw her, at a party some months ago, she seemed her usual glamorous self: a miniskirt riding outrageously high over those spectacular racehorse legs, a glittering gold tunic that made her stand out instantly in a crowded room, that radiant face partly obscured by the ever present curtain of blond-streaked hair. In fact, this is the first time I've ever seen her without that trademark shield carefully arranged over her cheeks. "As she has pointed out, she always hid behind her hair," says Stan Pottinger, a close friend and former longtime lover. "Now she's pulling her hair back and she's cut it short. As a metaphor, it definitely does represent a change. The question is, why was she hiding before? And why is she not hiding now?"

Her friends are all talking about the change in Gloria. Even Gloria is talking about the change in Gloria, albeit guardedly, with her usual mixture of easy charm and reticence. Within a few weeks, a whole lot of other people will also be talking about the change in Gloria when her new book—a dense and wide-ranging synthesis of politics, sociology, history, psychology, science, cultural anthropology, New Age experimentation, and personal exploration called *Revolution from Within: A Book of Self-Esteem*—hits the stores. In many ways, this is Steinem's first book, the one she has been waiting all these years to write; despite a journalistic career that has spanned three decades, it is her first full-length statement of her philosophical take on the world.

For a woman who has lived an almost entirely public life for close to a quarter of a century, Gloria Steinem is the most private of household names—not only loath to bare her innermost feelings before the world but, in many ways, a stranger to those very feelings herself. Ever since she started to attract attention and commentary, she has been described in countless articles as remote, as lovely and cordial but somehow distant and seemingly impervious to the emotional storms that buffet ordinary mortals. It has finally occurred to Steinem, at the age of fifty-seven, how much she had to repress to achieve that preternatural poise, how much the anguish and shame of a blighted childhood had to be buried to permit the emergence of the dazzlingly self-possessed icon who won fame and admiration all over the world. If Steinem is just starting to open the door a crack to others, it is because she is just starting to open it to herself.

Not that you could tell from her demeanor, of course. "Writing this book helped me a lot, and it changed me a lot," she says, as low-key and matter-of-fact as if she were discussing the weather, her expression the same as when she was studying the lunch menu and deciding on the swordfish. "This has been a funny, shaky, full-of-tendrils-to-other-places kind of bridge into some other country for me. Partly the country has to do with age, but that may actually be the least important part of it."

Aging is definitely on her mind these days, but she leavens any discussion with her usual wry humor. The good part? "You don't have to worry about how you look, because you're past the time when it really matters," she says with a grin. On her worst day, Gloria Steinem couldn't look bad, but I have to admit there are faint spots on the front of her baggy beige sweater, and the whole getup lacks a certain Steinemesque jolt of sex appeal.

Whatever the changes in her outward persona, however, the internal ones are far more profound—although even these Steinem describes with characteristic restraint. "In the past, I think I was being falsely cheerful much of the time," she says brightly. This realization did not come easily; it was only after a disastrous love affair with Mort Zuckerman, a serious depression (well, maybe not by anyone else's standards, but certainly a low point by her own), and the terror of life-threatening illness combined with a devastating professional fiasco that Steinem began, slowly and laboriously, to explore new ways of approaching her own life. She had spent months researching and writing the first version of this book, but when she presented her magnum opus on self-esteem to a close friend who happened to be a therapist, the reaction was a writer's nightmare. "I don't know how to tell you this," said Carmen Robinson, "but I think you have a self-esteem problem. You forgot to put yourself in."

It took Steinem a while longer to come to terms with the fact that she'd been forgetting to put herself in for about fifty years. Slowly, however, "I began to understand with a terrible clarity that we teach what we need to learn, and write what we need to read," Steinem explains in the introduction to *Revolution*. "I had felt drawn to such a book not only because other people needed it, but because I did. I had come to the burnt-out end of my ability to travel one kind of feverish, productive, but entirely externalized road—but I had no idea why."

It took Steinem another three years to produce a different kind of book, one that is decidedly unconventional in its category-defying form but that most definitely includes its author. Her growing understanding of her own psyche has both amused and touched her intimates. "Once that process began, she got as excited about it as a kid," says Robin Morgan, a friend for twenty years and the current editor of *Ms.* magazine. "She would fall upon platitudes with great excitement; for her, they were totally new. She would call me up and say, 'Have you read Alice Miller? Do you know that all of us, no matter how old we get, carry around the baggage of our childhood?' She was always fiercely smart, but the emotional intelligence had been so sacrificed to the intellectual intelligence."

Until recently, the idea of getting herself a good shrink seems never to have occurred to Steinem despite the obvious

traumas of her impoverished childhood. Her parents separated when she was ten, and Gloria was left alone to care for a mentally ill mother who was subject to terrifying hallucinations and was rarely able to assume any kind of parental responsibility. Gloria had to become not only a premature adult but the mother to her own incapacitated mother. Steinem's lifelong way of dealing with pain has been a pull-yourself-up-by-your-own-bootstraps-and-don't-complain stoicism that some friends attribute to her Ohio origins. "She used to say it amazed her that everyone in New York had a psychiatrist, when in the Midwest, if you had a mood, something was wrong with you," says Pottinger, a lawyer and investment banker who also comes from the Midwest. "The ethos is the tradition of the pioneers: You get the job done, and all the handwringing and moaning—you just don't do it. You grease the axle and put the wheel back on and get the horses moving—but the price you pay for that is less self-awareness than you have in some other cultures. Gloria, like a lot of us, came to the values of self-awareness late."

For a long time, Steinem apparently believed her childhood hadn't had any lasting impact. "I had a midwestern bias against therapy," she admits, "a kind of survivor's pride. I understood it for other people, but to me it just always seemed sort of unnecessary." Or even harmful, since she was all too familiar with the damage inflicted on many women by the rigid sexism of strict Freudian analysts. "I solved everything through acting, through being an activist. You go on believing that if something hits a bruise from the past it's really painful in the present, rather than understanding that there's another reason why it's so painful." She pauses and then adds softly, "It's difficult for a neglected child, because it isn't that there's something wrong—it's that there's *nothing*. You experience it as a lack of reality, as invisibility. So I set about making myself real by being useful."

And so the years whirled by in an unceasing blur of activity. For two decades, Steinem spent at least three or four days a week on the road, traveling and organizing, fund-raising and lobbying, endlessly bringing the clarion call of feminism to campuses and benefits, women's conferences and community groups. Anywhere the movement called, Gloria was there to answer. It didn't even have to be the movement that beckoned. "She meets someone on a plane, he asks her to speak at his daughter's Bat Mitzvah, and she goes," says Letty Cottin Pogrebin, a feminist author and close friend. "She does not say no to these things, and they eat her life away."

Steinem deflected any questions about these habits with her usual charming self-mockery. "She used to say flippy, 'The examined life is not worth living,' " recalls Suzanne Braun Levine, a longtime editor at *Ms.* magazine who is now the editor of the *Columbia Journalism Review*. "I think a lot of her courage came from forging ahead without letting herself ask questions. If you know you have to keep pushing, it would be smart not to look too deeply into your own needs."

The brownstone apartment where Steinem has lived since 1967 was a pit stop to change clothes before running to catch another flight, a crash pad which was always open to friends from all over the world but which, with its notoriously empty refrigerator and the eternal piles of cartons stuffed with books and papers littering the floor, indisputably lacked a certain domestic appeal. Not that Steinem had ever been exactly renowned for her homemaking skills. "I had lived in the apartment for at least four or five years before I found out the oven didn't work," Steinem admits. "She can make the world's greatest tuna-fish salad, and after that, forget it," Pottinger attests.

These days Steinem is able to recognize her apartment as "a symbol of the self," and with the help of a decorator friend, she has finally made it into a cozy and welcoming place, full of kilim rugs and overstuffed furniture and big pillows in rich colors and textures. Such domestic comfort was "something I didn't experience growing up, so it felt foreign to me; it didn't feel like home," muses Steinem, who grew up in a dilapidated, rat-infested, virtually empty farmhouse a few feet from a major highway. "I don't know why it took me so long to realize you need to have a home," she adds, a trifle sheepishly. "I guess I thought it was just something other people had."

Just as it was other people who had marriages, families, children. Steinem's avoidance of such norms has always been an irritant for many observers. For thirty years, the commentary on Gloria Steinem has reflected an almost Manichaean duality, a schizoid seesawing between white and black as various analysts described her either as a Gandhiesque saint who cared only about saving the world or as a cunning opportunist who used a succession of causes as a smoke screen for her own overweening ambition. Even before she became an international symbol of American feminism, Steinem was a lightning rod for an extraordinary degree of malice from friend and foe alike, and that has never changed; it *(Continued on page 137)*

Gloria, at about five years old, with her mother in the late 1930s.

Trashing Gloria Steinem became the favorite spectator sport of the smart set.

PARIS CLOUT

Photograph by HELMUT NEWTON

Claude Berri, director of *Jean de Florette* and *Manon of the Spring*, is among the most influential filmmakers in Europe. But recently he sold off half of his production company to indulge his newest passion: assembling what has quickly become one of the most important private modern-art collections in the world. ANTHONY HADEN-GUEST reports from Cannes and the Rive Gauche

Berri in Cannes, *left;* Kounellis's *Lunedi, Martedi, Mercoledi,* with a Diego Giacometti armchair, in Berri's Paris apartment.

He needs tenderness. Not an emotion in lavish supply in the movie business.

Cy Twombly's
Untitled (Bolsena),
Sue et Mare armchairs,
and one of Berri's
Printz tables.

The bar of the Majestic Hotel is one of the choicest venues during the Cannes Film Festival. Security men with more than their due ration of bone in their faces check nonresidents for festival passes, and it is a safe bet that most of the crowd in the bar will be movie folk. The two pretty young women at our table were researching the room with avid eyes. "That man," said one, indicating a fellow with a ponytail, "he is a famous actor, no?"

No, I said apologetically. A natural mistake. Hollywood people do tend to look alike. The women's glances skittered on and on, like flat stones bouncing over the bright bay.

Neither the two women nor the deal-makers who were circling around them paid any attention to the man who was walking toward the door with a quick, stiff-legged strut through the throng a few feet from the table, carrying a bottle of vodka. He was slight, middle-aged, balding, and had a look of melancholy resignation on his face, like somebody who has lost an adored but aged pet. He came up to me. We exchanged a few words—the vodka was apparently a present for a Russian director—and he slipped away.

I wondered whether to point out to the women that the man they had ignored had more heft in Cannes than America's two most ballyhooed contributions to the event, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Madonna Ciccone, combined.

Claude Berri is an outstanding actor, director, and producer; he directed *Jean de Florette* and *Manon of the Spring*, which restored some luster to France's flagging film industry and which were two of the most successful French films in the United States ever, and he has produced movies for other directors he admires, such as Jean-Jacques Annaud's *The Bear* and Miloš Forman's *Valmont*. A subsidiary of Berri's Renn Productions distributed *Dances with Wolves* in France.

Uranus, the most recent movie that he has directed, deals with one of France's uneasiest years, 1945, when the vanquished became the victors. It boasts a wonderfully almost-over-the-top performance by the inevitable Gérard Depardieu, and was a solid hit in France. In October, Berri opened something else—a private exhibition space in Paris. It will enable him to show part of what is certainly one of the most extraordinary collections of avant-garde art in France—indeed, one of the most extraordinary in the world.

Six years ago, Claude Berri wouldn't have recognized a piece of avant-garde art if he stubbed his toe on it. It happened so.

Berri had always enjoyed looking at art. "I like Art Deco," he told me. "I would always have two or three pictures. Nothing important, but I needed to look at them in the light. The relationship between the paintings, the light, and myself, that was what was important."

Berri's favorite painting was by Tamara de Lempicka, the Art Deco artist who glides on the fringe of camp without losing a sort of crystalline allure. It showed two young girls. This, along with much else, including a watch, which his mother had given him, was stolen from Berri's Champs-Élysées apartment in August 1985, while he was in Provence simultaneously filming *Jean de Florette* and *Manon of the Spring*. "It annoyed me. I loved this painting," Berri said.

The loss of his art haunted him. The Provençal movies were based on a two-part novel by Marcel Pagnol, so Berri wasn't reading any fiction. Instead he began to immerse himself in a heap of books on a subject about which he had only vague general knowledge: modern art. The film unit returned to Paris in November to finish the movies. "Every day I went to galleries, to museums. I *looked*. I knew nothing. I knew nothing!"

He found himself another Lempicka, and bought it, but this did not remotely satisfy his craving. "Like Jeanne d'Arc, I had a vision," Berri said. "The theft was destiny! I suddenly had to look at paintings. I made a decision. I had no money in my pocket. But I had my company."

At the time, Renn Productions was worth $50 million, by Berri's own estimate. At fifty-two, he decided to sell off half of it to indulge his new obsession.

It actually was not odd that Berri had been unrecognized by the stargazers and the mostly American movie traffickers in the bar of the Majestic. There are, of course, always two Cannes film events going on at the same time: a Hollywood festival—meaning the studios, "the majors," as the locution goes—and the rest.

The big studios know they stand to lose a great deal and gain little by submitting their megahit wannabees to the very untender mercies of the Cannes jurors. (Interestingly enough, the 1991 jury was headed by Roman Polanski, whose own Hollywood career ended abruptly when he took it on the lam rather than face charges of having had unlawful sex with a thirteen-year-old girl in Los Angeles in 1977. Polanski has had only one film success since, and that was *Tess*, produced by Claude Berri.) But the Hollywood studios, if prudent in what they put on the festival screens, are otherwise ubiquitous. Deals are hawked. Producers within yelling distance of one another on Wilshire Boulevard dig into the langouste on the Carlton terrace. Arnold Schwarzenegger showed up, not, of course, with *Terminator 2*, supposedly the most expensive movie ever made—at $100-million-plus—but to promote a restaurant chain. Madonna was there, but to promote herself via her documentary, *Truth or Dare*.

This is not to say that North American movies are not shown at the festival, just that the films chosen are "serious," or have been shot on a modest budget, or have a strong personal style, like *sex, lies, and videotape*, which broke through at Cannes in 1989, or Ethan and Joel Coen's *Barton Fink*, which won the 1991 Palme d'Or, or Spike Lee's movies, which seem to be permanent, unofficial runners-up.

This is the festival where Claude Berri is an unobtrusively dominant presence. It is to the point that he was in Cannes to promote the interests of ARP, which stands for Auteurs-Réalisateurs-Producteurs, meaning filmmakers who can function as writers, directors, and producers. Berri says that this group was the brainchild of François Truffaut, a close friend and the best man at his wedding, but after Truffaut's death it was Berri who brought things to fruition. Talking of directors and producers, Berri has observed that directors have the moral right, but producers have the economic clout. "We

INTERIORS PHOTOGRAPHED BY CHARLES DOLFI-MICHEL, PRODUCED BY YVES J. HAYAT

"Berri is not American. He is pure

Berri's Rue de Lille apartment, with artworks by Lucio Fontana and a Giacometti table.

French product."

producer-directors have both," he added. The trade magazine *Le Film Français* has noted that Claude Berri "does not like to have positions imposed on him." In France, by the way, directors have the right of final cut by *law*. They, not producers, have the ultimate control. Now, there's a concept to send blood pressure skyrocketing in Hollywood.

Onstage at Cannes for a tribute to the late director Jacques Demy, Berri looked pensive, a bit sad. It was appropriate, but, actually, Berri almost always looks pensive, a bit sad. It isn't the glumness that condenses around Woody Allen like a mist on a cold bottle, more the look of somebody who hopes things will turn out

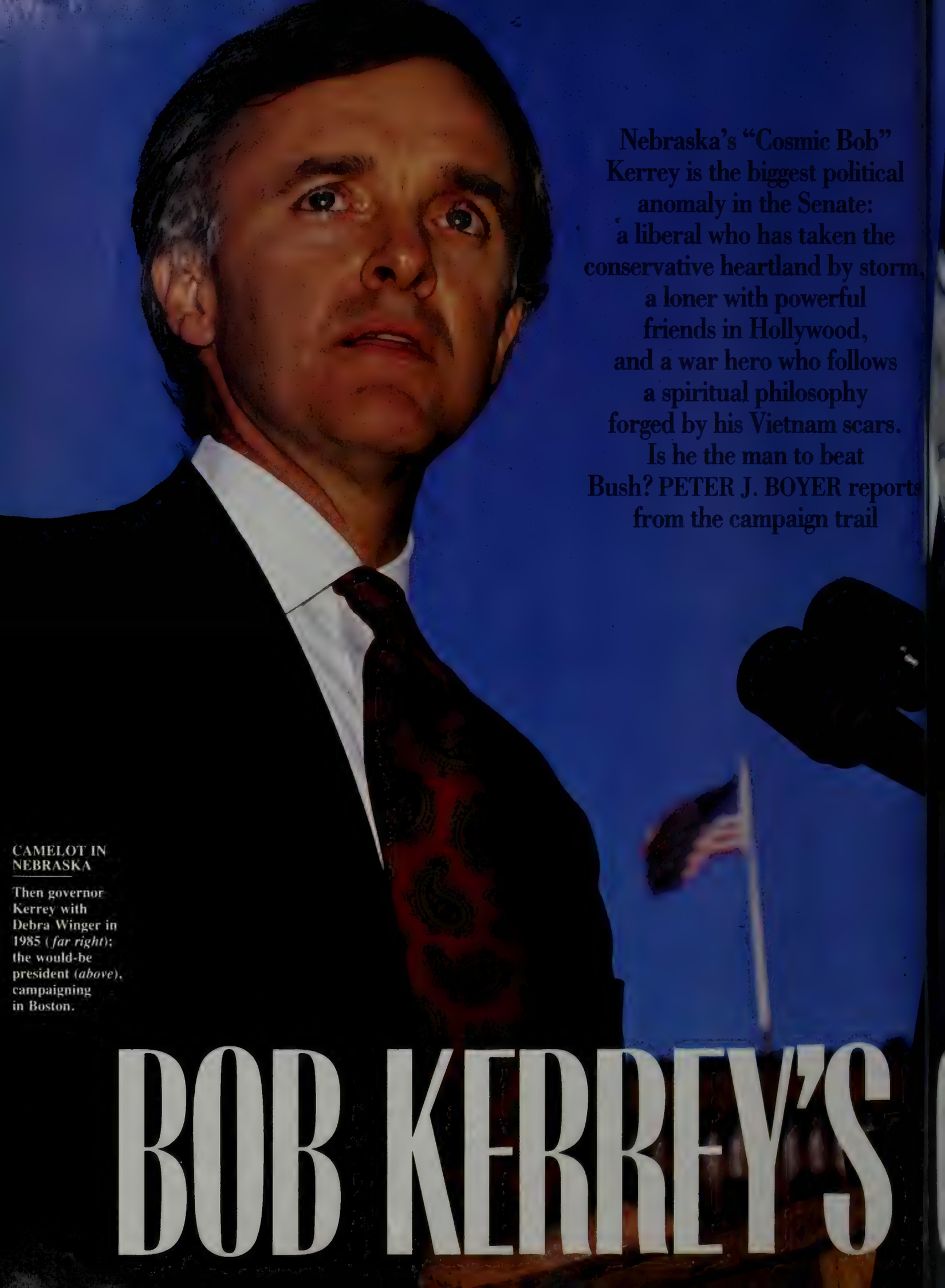
Yves Klein's *Monochrome* (1958) and *Relief Éponges* (1957).

O.K. but isn't taking any bets on it. I mentioned to him that he usually looked—that euphemistic term—preoccupied.

"Like I am always thinking?" he asked. "No, no, no."

He tapped a pack of Lucky Strikes. "I am thinking about the cigarettes. It's the last one," he said.

It was a rare evasion from a filmmaker who has been remarkable in inviting viewers into his life in a number of autobiographical movies. In the first of these, *The Two of Us,* he shows how as the seven-year-old son of a Jewish couple in Paris, a Polish furrier father and an illiterate Romanian mother, he was sheltered during the war years by an anti-Semitic old grouch (played by the great Michel Simon). In *Le Cinéma de Papa,* which Berri directed when he was thirty-six, he takes us through some childhood scenes and examines his relationship with *(Continued on page 134)*



BOB KERREY'S

Nebraska's "Cosmic Bob" Kerrey is the biggest political anomaly in the Senate: a liberal who has taken the conservative heartland by storm, a loner with powerful friends in Hollywood, and a war hero who follows a spiritual philosophy forged by his Vietnam scars. Is he the man to beat Bush? PETER J. BOYER reports from the campaign trail

CAMELOT IN NEBRASKA

Then governor Kerrey with Debra Winger in 1985 (*far right*); the would-be president (*above*), campaigning in Boston.

ODYSSEY

Two days after Senator Bob Kerrey's September 30 announcement that he'd run for the White House, a Washington conference of political-poll takers overwhelmingly picked him as the likeliest of the declared Democratic candidates to win the nomination and take on George Bush in 1992.

The barest sketch of Joseph Robert Kerrey reveals why: forty-eight years old, good looks, decorated Vietnam War hero, amputee marathoner, self-made millionaire, glamorous bachelor (actress Debra Winger's squeeze), and proven Republican-slayer in the conservative heartland.

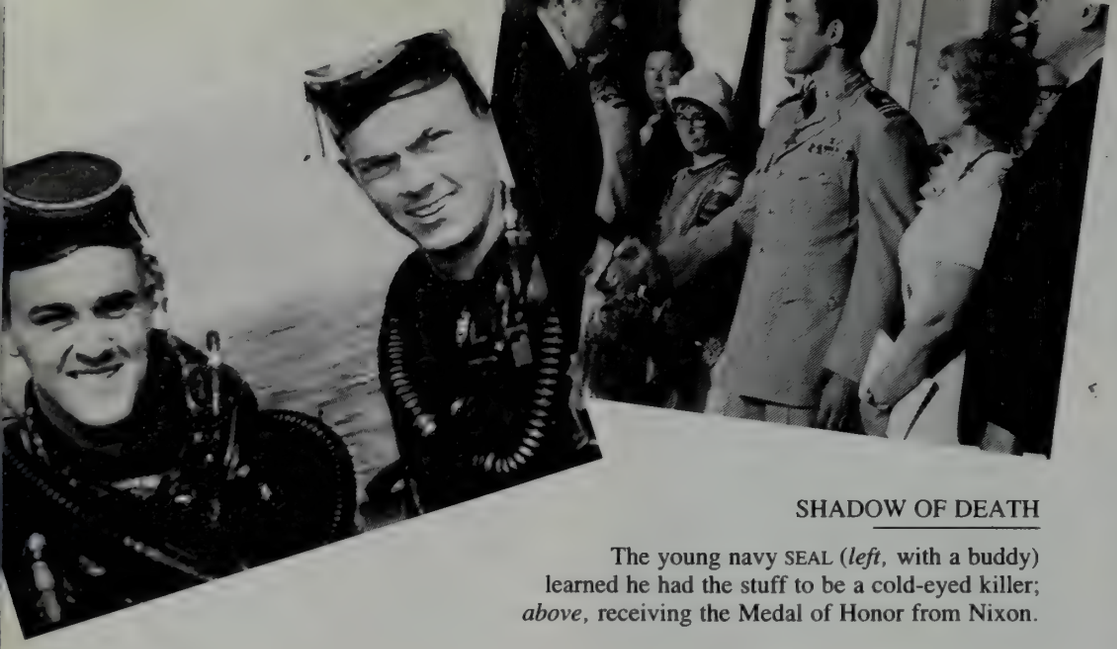
He is, noted one political writer after Kerrey won his Senate seat, "a Democratic political consultant's wet dream."

"This is amazing," says Kathy Sullivan, a thirty-seven-year-old lawyer and a good Irish Democrat, who's agreed to host a small "meet and greet" for Kerrey. Her little wood-frame house in Manchester, New Hampshire's 6th Ward is packed with people, more than she expected, so many more that the overflow has spilled out onto the front porch and also around back, where the cold beer is.

"Democrats have been the party of losers, but the fact that there are so many people here tonight interested in seeing him, finding out what he's about. . . . People call it charisma, or whatever, but some guys, there's that little something, you can't describe what it is. And that's what this guy has."

If it is charisma, it is of a sort peculiar to Bob Kerrey. What the people at Kathy Sullivan's house this night are seeing is a nice-looking fellow of average height and build, with blue eyes set wide in an enormous bulb-shaped head. What they hear is an ordinary speaker, a bit subdued, who talks not unexpectedly about "building for greatness," focusing on his pet issue, a national health-care plan. But what charges the evening, what makes this candidate different, is not what he says or how he says it: it is the feeling that at long last this is the one, this is the candidate who can lead the Democrats out of the wilderness; this is a Democrat who can win.

Kerrey is a politician who was creat-



SHADOW OF DEATH

The young navy SEAL (*left*, with a buddy) learned he had the stuff to be a cold-eyed killer; *above*, receiving the Medal of Honor from Nixon.

Doctors and nurses were around his bed and a chaplain was ready to administer last rites. Kerrey, however, was having a blast.

ed by a single transforming event, the Vietnam War. It cost him his innocence and part of a leg, and won him the Medal of Honor; it set him off on a psychic voyage that stood him apart in politics, and now has landed him in a presidential campaign.

On the flight from Nebraska to New Hampshire, I asked Kerrey about something he'd said the day before at a campaign speech in Iowa, about surrendering oneself for others in order to be free. It was not standard-issue campaign rhetoric, and I wondered what he had meant, exactly.

"It's the only way of becoming truly free," he replied.

Free from what?

"It's not so much free," Kerrey said, turning in his seat, "it's just that, at that moment, you are free. I'm not sure that —it's very mystical—but I'm not sure that any of us are permanently free. I'm just conscious that when I give everything to my kids, or to my friends, or, better yet, to somebody I don't even know, and I'm not afraid of losing it all, whether it's my life or my possessions or whatever, that I feel exquisitely free. That's something that I've felt."

Such metaphysical musings are another product of Kerrey's transformation, and reveal a churning spirituality that is as central to the man as those surface qualities that so entice the political professionals. And that is why Bob Kerrey's run for the White House presents an exquisite paradox: an irresistible candidate in a process that abhors exotica.

Part of Kerrey's allure is that he does not behave like a politician. He has a deep personal ambivalence about public life. He unapologetically walked away from the Nebraska governor's office in 1986 despite record popularity ratings and growing national stature, and was drawn into the Senate race only reluctantly two years later. He blames most of our national ills on "the politicians," and privately sympathizes with the gathering term-limitation fervor, even though it would likely help Republicans most. "A massive turnover might be refreshing," he says, voicing a sentiment that would give many Democrats massive turnover of the stomach.

A determined unorthodoxy has given Kerrey a reputation for unpredictability, and a portfolio of contradiction: he disdains the term "liberal," yet his voting record ranks among the most liberal in the Senate; he is skeptical of government, yet his domestic proposals amount to a reprise of the Great Society. He is a born agonizer, and a public one, with the result that his first conclusion on an issue is by no means certain to be his last.

All of this—the scars of Vietnam, the ambivalence, the rebirth of idealism from disillusionment—makes him a man of his times, to some the apotheosis of a generation.

"Kerrey is potentially the most interesting Democratic politician on the scene," says Democratic pollster and consultant Geoffrey Garin. "He brings a star quality to politics, [and] he has an interesting story. He is an appealing person, and he sort of has a different approach to politics. For the baby-boom-generation voters, he has the potential to be the James Dean of American politics." A tailor-made candidate for the generation that deems itself the most interesting in history.

But in national politics there can be a decided downside to the label "interesting," which is sometimes another way of saying "screwy" (Exhibit A: former California governor Jerry Brown). Kerrey has been compared to Brown, and his inclination to follow his inner currents sometimes makes him seem, as one Democratic consultant put it, a little "spacey."

"That is the true tension of the Kerrey candidacy," Garin says. "There is this fine line. In a lot of ways, Kerrey's performance is the most important part of this. If Kerrey comes off as a serious person, if Kerrey passes the threshold of presidential seriousness, then I think he becomes a very formidable candidate. That's a matter of perception, and we don't know the answer yet, which makes him very interesting. It really will be fascinating to see how he plays out. There's some genuine mystery to it."

Bob Kerrey's inner journey has a destination, a place where he once found a sublime peace and perfect clarity, and he's been trying to get back to it ever since. It is a place right next to death.

In March of 1969, Lieutenant (j.g.) Bob Kerrey was lying in a navy-hospital bed in Japan, to which he'd been evacuated after a successful but personally disastrous commando mission in the bay of Nha Trang in Vietnam. Kerrey, the leader of the team, had taken the brunt of an exploding enemy grenade. He was almost completely bandaged, and in writhing pain, particularly in his right leg, which was in a cast, the mangled foot still barely attached. He could feel parts of his shattered limb rattling around in the cast, and in a fog of pain he began to fade toward death. And then it happened.

"In an instant, it was all gone," he says. "There was a moment where there was no pain. And it was one of those compressed moments where I could see what I had done the previous day, and I could see what I did the day before that. And all of a sudden I could see my whole life back to age one or two—it just unfolded like an artichoke."

He had the urge to communicate this, to write it down, but he was hardly able to move. His roommate summoned a nurse, and soon doctors and nurses were around his bed and a chaplain was ready to administer last rites. Kerrey, however, was having a blast.

"It was a moment when I could see my whole life, and it was great fun. It was laughable." He saw with particular clarity those moments of falseness, of self-betrayal. "I could see myself doing something that could get me into trouble, an effort to be something that I wasn't, an effort to be something that I didn't feel. I could see myself lying, in order to be one of the guys or to get something done, or whatever. And it was very interesting. It was very exciting.

"It was meeting a part of me—I mean, I could see myself. I could see me: I was standing outside looking not only at me in the bed, but me compressed for a twenty-five-year period. I could see my whole life, and it was like packed into one moment. I've thought about whether it was drugs, but I don't think so. I mean, I'm telling you, I've been medicated up one side of the wall and down the other afterwards, and nothing took pain away like that. Not only was it gone, but none of the drowsiness, none of the desire to go to sleep. I mean, I was, in the very strict definition of the word, I was awake. I'm telling you, it was a tremendous gift. I've never been presented a gift quite like that. I mean, there *is* a God, that would come and present somebody like me a gift at that moment."

Kerrey told me this amazing story one morning in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he had been the featured speaker at Harvard's Kennedy School Institute of Politics the night before. The evening had gone particularly well, Kerrey slipping into a kind of serene self-possession he is able to call upon at key public moments. I asked, Does anything from that hospital experience endure?

"Yes. I've struggled every conscious moment, where I'm able to, to get back to it. It would be my desire to be in that attitude right now. I was very aware of the power of God, and the power of goodness. And I had no fear at all, no difficulty acknowledging not only defects, but deficiencies. I mean, I could see things that I can't see right now."

Can you tap into that moment at will, just push a mental button?

"I can tap into it, but. . .I'm outside of it now, I can't get close to it. I mean, I know it was there, and it helps me. I mean, I know what's possible. I think it might be possible to get to that point again."

It is not exactly a subject that comes up on the campaign trail, or anywhere else for that matter, but people close to Kerrey know about it, and see it as a source of strength. Debra Winger, who had a near-death experience herself as a teenager, sensed it almost from the moment she met Kerrey. "I always refer to it as a club, and I can almost tell within a half-hour of meeting someone if they're in the club, or if they've been at a meeting. He's definitely a member of the club."

But membership, Winger says, requires work—"It can fade, you know, unless you sort of, in a way, keep death alive"—and she worries about Kerrey's finding time on the campaign trail to roam around in "that freedom within."

"As with anything else, it's like a practice. And I think he does practice it, academically, and my argument always is you have to have a moment, you have to have this moment for reflection. And that's what scares me about the way politics are: you're always running and running and running—no truer word has ever been used than 'running' for office. . . . I worry about Bob having the time for that reflection."

Back in the political wars in Nebraska, Kerrey's vanquished foes would often puzzle over the hold he had on the people of the Cornhusker State. He was a divorced man in a "family values" culture, a Democrat in a place where Republicans usually win. He presided as governor during hard times, said no even to the interest groups who'd supported him, and still, his opponents marveled, the people of Nebraska seemed to love him.

But Ted Kooser, an insurance man and poet in Garland, Nebraska, was not at all surprised by his friend Bob Kerrey's magical sway. Kooser knew about politics and the theory of *duende*.

Duende is a notion in Spanish culture that life is enriched by an awareness of nearby mortality, that those who know how to hold hands with death live heightened lives. Kooser once read an essay by Federico García Lorca called "Play and the Theory of Duende," which suggested that the great flamenco dancers are great because they dance out to the edge of death, collapse from exhaustion, and then pull back, and that this is the true art. Kooser saw a parallel.

"A part of the concept of *duende* is that a person who is constantly aware of one's mortality is a different sort of person, has a kind of attraction about them, a kind of magic about them," Kooser says. "I have, from time to time, told Bob that I felt he had *duende*.

"There is something about some of these people that is tremendously attractive, and compelling, and you feel good being around them. It's a very magical thing. I don't know many who have it. And also a great part of this—you don't want to neglect this part of it—a great part of this spirit is humor. It's very essential. And Bob laughs in a very charming way, and lives with humor. I think that's part of it. It's understanding you're only here this one time, and always this sort of shadow accompanying you."

If he hadn't gone to Vietnam, Bob Kerrey told news anchor Jim Lehrer in 1982, he would have been "a middle-class suburban white boy who had never hurt, who had never suffered, who had never felt any pain, who had never realized that there was suffering and pain outside of my life. And I saw it, felt it, tasted it firsthand. And I know it exists right now as we sit. Even though I may not feel it myself."

Indeed, there was little in the life of a boy growing up in northeast Lincoln in the 1950s to suggest a future of politics or spiritual journeys, not to mention beautiful movie-star girlfriends.

The Kerrey household was a middle-class, Middle America archetype, rooted in the local church and guided by a set of unquestioned values. Kerrey's father, James, was a builder, his mother, Elinor, a homemaker who went back to school only when her seven kids were

Kerrey's campaign presents an exquisite paradox: an irresistible candidate in a process that abhors exotica.

grown. Theirs was a happy, noisy home, with various relatives and dislocated school chums passing through, and the Kerrey kids, untouched by tragedy or crisis, were graced with a sense that all was well and forever would be. The closest that any came to juvenile delinquency was when one of the boys got caught in a mooning incident.

Bob, with his flattop and Ricky Nelson grin, was a minor heartthrob at Lincoln Northeast High, and though he was a natural student, he also had a deep devotion to the pursuit of fun. He was a determined athlete, despite his asthma, running track, playing golf, and, although he never starred, earning a letter in football. It was the time of Kennedy and Nixon, Sputnik and *77 Sunset Strip*, and the ambitions that formed in the heart of young Bob Kerrey were modest, and eminently attainable: he wanted to become a pharmacist, and to stay in Nebraska.

He was at pharmacy school at the University of Nebraska right there in Lincoln, a beer-sucking frat rat well on his way to a secure future behind a drug counter, when one day, with the arrival of a piece of mail from the U.S. government, everything suddenly changed. The notice to report for a draft physical inspired Kerrey to enroll in graduate school, with its accompanying draft deferment, and when that ended, he was faced with a choice. His asthma might have gotten him out of the service; his pharmacy degree might have at least guaranteed a cozy position in the rear. But a war was on, and there was the call of duty; besides, he'd been partial to the navy ever since reading *The Caine Mutiny*. A destroyer might be fun.

Kerrey enlisted in the navy, but by the end of Officer Candidate School, when recruiters from the navy's various branches came around to tout their specialties to the incoming officers, the prospect of life on a destroyer seemed less compelling. There was this other group of recruiters, different from the rest, more casual, less regimented, less navy. They were from something called the Underwater Demolition Team, and they were tanned, wore sunglasses, and showed movies adorned by pretty girls in bathing suits. Kerrey volunteered.

THE POLITICS OF PAIN

Vietnam cost Kerrey part of a leg, and started him on the road to the White House; *left*, running with his prosthesis in the Nike Capital Challenge.

That was when Bob Kerrey, the Nebraska pharmacist, learned that he had the stuff to be a cold-eyed killer. At the time, 1968, the navy was quietly developing an offbranch of the U.D.T. called SEALs (for Sea, Air, and Land), an elite guerrilla commando team designed as a counterpoint to the army's Green Berets. The team's name conjured up images of a bunch of navy guys frogging around in wet suits, but, in fact, they got the dirtiest jobs in Vietnam, jobs that even the Green Berets wouldn't touch. One of the SEALs' early operations was in an inhospitable realm in the Mekong Delta called Rung Sat—Vietnamese for Jungle of Death—a no-man's-land of desperadoes and Vietcong. There was no good way to prepare for such warfare (the SEALs had to learn, for example, to operate at night), and Rung Sat became a meat grinder. They took 92 percent casualties, dead or wounded, but they succeeded in cleaning it out.

Kerrey went for SEAL training at the Coronado, California, U.D.T. school—better known as "hack it" school, because its chief purpose was not so much to train its young volunteers as to determine whether they were tough enough to "hack it" in the unpleasantness that awaited in Vietnam. Kerrey remembers the training as being "rigorous," but Gary Parrott, a SEAL buddy who remains one of Kerrey's closest friends, is more detailed in his recollection. "They encouraged you to quit, every day for four and a half months, until the training was over."

The worst, Parrott recalls, was the water training, where the recruits were put through endurance tests in the icy Pacific, without wet suits. "I can remember times they'd put us out there and say, 'We've got too many people in this class. Too many of you guys are pussies! We're gonna put you out in that cold water until five of you quit!' And you'd get hypothermic out there."

Bob Kerrey, it turned out, was a natural student in the ways of ambush war, a demanding science requiring not only the ability to slit an enemy throat, but also the nervy matter of crouching in the bush at night in the enemy's midst, awaiting the right moment. "I was very

gung ho," he recalls. "I enjoyed it."

Kerrey arrived in Vietnam in January 1969, had a few successful missions in the Central Highlands, and then came his chance for a big score. An enemy defector revealed that a high-level cadre of North Vietnamese sappers was hiding on an island in the bay of Nha Trang. Kerrey planned an attack, and on the moonless night of March 14 he led a seven-man team to Hon Tre island, scaling a 350-foot cliff in the hope of catching the enemy by surprise. The plan was to split the team in half and catch the enemy in a cross fire, but when somebody bumped into a hammock, alerting a guard, a firefight broke out, lighting up the night—AK-47s and M16s firing away at ten feet. A grenade bounced off of a comrade's helmet and exploded at Kerrey's feet, ripping one foot away from his leg. Bleeding profusely, pieces of dirty shrapnel from the homemade grenade embedded in his arms and legs and face, Kerrey directed his outnumbered squad in a counterambush that resulted in the killing or capture of most of the enemy before a medevac helicopter descended and took him away. Someone told him he'd gotten his "million-dollar wound"—a ticket home.

Twenty years after Kerrey left Vietnam, when as a national politician his every move and statement was studied for deeper meaning, it would be said that Bob Kerrey was a captive of his experience in Vietnam and its aftermath. Kerrey would agree. His centerpiece issue—a plan for blanket national health care called Health USA—is framed by his own costly, extensive medical care, provided by the Veterans Administration. His foreign-policy views—his "no" vote on the Gulf War, for example—are informed by his experience in Vietnam. His domestic vision, heavy on social assistance programs, is charged by the compassion he learned from his own suffering and that of those around him at the Philadelphia Naval Hospital during a nine-month stay in 1969. If you want to know about me, he has said, then learn about Philadelphia.

After he was stabilized in Japan, Kerrey was transported to Philadelphia Naval Hospital, a "trash can," Kerrey calls it, filled with pain and the refuse of the war—young men so recently animated by the bravado of soldiering now languishing without limbs, dignity, or hope. When the doctors made their daily "stump rounds," the patients could judge their place on the schedule by the distance of the agonized screams.

"It was like *Alice in Wonderland,* a dream, going through the door, and all of a sudden I'm in a different world. I didn't know there were people out there hurting. I knew nothing about pain, suffering. I didn't know anything about being that dependent upon someone else, having to ask for a bedpan, all of the other sorts of things that you had to do in that sort of environment."

After he came out of surgery that amputated his right leg at mid-calf, Kerrey, the former athlete, looked to his mother at the end of his bed and asked, "How much did they take?" and, trying to lift his spirits, she said, "There is so much left, that's what's important." But confronting the rest of his life as a disfigured cripple, Kerrey was deeply morose, his disillusionment hardening as he listened to radio news reports about Richard Nixon's "peace with honor" pullout from Vietnam. "Nixon wasn't trying to get peace with honor—real honor," Kerrey says. "It was honor for himself."

But Kerrey's roommates remember another side of his stay there, a distinct uplifting of mood from the moment Lieutenant Kerrey was admitted to the amputee ward. In his memoir, *Fortunate Son,* Lewis B. Puller Jr., an outpatient in the ward when Kerrey arrived, remembers his first meeting with Kerrey, as doctors were deciding at what level to amputate his injured leg:

> The morning I entered my old room and discovered Bob, he was listening to an Aretha Franklin tape played several decibels above what the ward rules allowed, and he was trying to take pictures of his mangled leg with an Instamatic camera. He seemed oblivious of pain, and after I introduced myself, he handed me the camera and asked me to snap a few pictures of his leg for the American Legion folks back in his home state of Nebraska. Jim [Crotty, Kerrey's roommate] and I exchanged glances, but neither of us could tell if Bob was delirious or just marching to the beat of a different drum. I took the pictures while Bob joined Aretha in singing "Respect," and I sensed immediately that life on SOQ 12 was about to undergo a rejuvenation.

Kerrey assumed the role of McMurphy in *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest,* enlivening the place with sardonic humor and rebellious pranks. He poured lighter fluid on balsa gliders and sent them flaming out the hospital windows, and when forced to suffer the indignity of having his bowel movements checked every day, he retaliated by stealing a pair of forceps and planting jelly beans in his feces. When the orderly complained, Kerrey threatened to subject the fellow's car keys to the same treatment. One particularly depressing patient, a brain-damaged officer who'd botched a suicide attempt, sat in his wheelchair, uttering only, "Turbulence, turbulence!" A tragic case, but tragedy was the context of the place; the fellow apparently was memorably well endowed, a fact that occasionally prompted Kerrey to remark, "If it were an inch longer, it would be a foot instead of a penis."

But what his roommates remember most of all was Kerrey's seeming indifference toward pain. His wound was, he says, "a dirty wound, and it was a handmade explosive—shrapnel and wood and stuff." In the days after the amputation, Puller and Crotty watched in wonderment as Kerrey resisted taking the painkillers that they'd so desperately needed themselves, and instead asked for a fungo bat to beat back the pain in his phantom limb. "Jim and I were left to conclude sheepishly," Puller writes, "that some people had higher tolerances to pain than others."

The pain was there, though, and Kerrey couldn't walk without bleeding for the first couple of years. There would be many operations—at least one a year for seven years on his leg and hands—and many fittings for new prostheses. "It wasn't until '77 or '78...where I was able to begin to do a few things without feeling like I was going to just shut down." But even now, as he stands for hours on end in the grueling campaign process, and runs up to five miles a day, the pain never shows. "There's a base level of pain that keeps you awake," he says with a shrug. "It's nothing horrible."

"He tends to be a bit stoic," says Winger. Gary Parrott says that when Kerrey visits him on Puget Sound they often go for a run, "and we've got to stop, and he pulls that leg off and it's bleeding and *(Continued on page 127)*

PETER C. BORSARI

What producer Lili Zanuck (*Cocoon, Driving Miss Daisy*) wants, she gets. But only after a major battle. Why? Because in Hollywood, if a woman is smart and successful, she is considered the t-word, when, as Zanuck knows, it's really all about having guts. LYNN HIRSCHBERG reports as Zanuck makes her directorial debut with *Rush*

Manic Zanuck

She doesn't like the word. In fact, she doesn't think it fits, even though her mother thinks it does. And yet, ten minutes with Lili Fini Zanuck and one impression lingers: she is tough. Meaning, from the jump, Lili is no-nonsense, straight-ahead, determined. "I'm a bottom-line kind of dame," she explains, carefully avoiding the dread t-word. "I don't manipulate anyone and I don't like to be manipulated. But tough. . . I don't think of myself that way."

At the moment (a Sunday, early November, Los Angeles), she is illustrating her point of view at a photo session. These pictures are being taken to promote *Rush,* a remarkable film starring Jason Patric and Jennifer Jason Leigh as two undercover narcotics agents who become addicts in the line of duty. In a spectacular, sure-handed debut, Lili directed the film, which is dark and uncompromising and, not surprisingly, quite tough. Having co-produced *Cocoon* and *Driving Miss Daisy,* which won the Academy Award for best picture of 1989, Lili is quite familiar with the world of publicity. She knows exactly what she wants and, more important, what she doesn't. In a land of insecurity and fear, Lili is very certain.

"I will not wear this dress," Lili says now, going through a rack of designer frocks that the photographer's stylist has assembled. She's wearing an oversize yellow T-shirt and sweatpants, and her long blond hair is swept up on top of her head in large rollers. At first glance, she has the look of the quintessential all-American high-school cheerleader (which she wasn't), but her voice, which is rather harsh and gravelly and has an indeterminate but clearly southernish accent, messes with the image. "If you just heard the voice, you might not want to meet the person," Lili's husband, Dick Zanuck, once told her. But, actually, the voice is a welcome counterpoint—it's direct, a surprise.

Lili holds up a low-cut black dress with a large feathery flower on each breast. "No way," she says. She plows through the rack—discarding an iridescent silver ensemble, a celadon taffeta coat, and a pleated red silk dress in favor of a long black velvet jacket with a handkerchief hem. "This will be O.K.," she says to the photographer. "But I really would have liked to do a Cecil B. DeMille thing. Or a clown—I would have dressed up as a clown." The photographer looks incredulous but bemused, not sure if she's kidding. "All-the-way

Photograph by WAYNE MASER

ILDED LILI
I went from being
bimbo to Medusa''
Hollywood's
es, she says.
pposite page: the
anucks celebrating
fter *Driving Miss Daisy*
as named best picture
the 1990
cademy Awards.

"When I met Lili," says Richard, "she struck me

artificial is interesting to me," says Lili. "Halfway isn't."

She ponders the black velvet a minute. "What do you think?" she asks the photographer. "I'm a fickle woman," she adds. "You better decide right away." Lili is smiling. "You'll look great in that," he says definitively. "Yeah?" she says, suddenly a bit ambivalent. "This is exactly what William Wyler wore when he was photographed. To be a director now, you need to have good legs." The photographer smiles. "You're a fun guy," he says. Lili laughs. "I mean, *girl*," he corrects himself. "You're a fun *girl*."

"When I met Lili," Richard Zanuck is saying, "she struck me, at that time, as a real ball-breaker." Zanuck grins. "She's mellowed since then." He pauses—unlike his wife, he chooses his words carefully, although, like her, he is surprisingly frank. At fifty-seven, Zanuck is quite tan and very fit—he runs five miles nearly every day. The exercise is only part of it—Zanuck also runs at 5:30 A.M. because he likes "the way it sets up the day." Like Lili, he is driven; he thrives on work. "Because he is not flamboyant, people underestimate what a great producer Dick is," says an admiring rival. "He's had Oscars *and* big box office. Very few producers can say that."

"My Achilles is bothering me and I didn't run this morning," says Zanuck, sipping tea in the coffee shop of the Omni Hotel in Charleston, South Carolina. He and Lili are living in a beautiful rented house by the water while *Rich in Love*, the latest Zanuck Company movie, shoots nearby. This one has been more Dick's baby than Lili's—when filming began, she was still doing postproduction in California on *Rush*, which is scheduled to open nationwide in January. "In thirteen years of marriage we never spent a night apart," he says. "And then during *Rush*, David Brown and I received the Irving Thalberg award at the Academy Awards ceremony. Lili was shooting in Houston and couldn't get away. She watched it on TV. That broke the spell—thirteen years!"

Breaking the spell on that particular evening, March 25, 1991, the night of the Oscars, seems an odd twist of fate. Until Lili, David Brown and Zanuck had been partners—in fact, theirs had been the only marriage that had lasted.

"When I met Lili, I had had these two nine-year marriages and the last thing I wanted to do was get involved again," says Zanuck, warming to the topic of their barely four-month courtship. "And she seemed very tough. I was used to a different kind of lady—more demure. And in those other relationships, everything would revolve around me, which is probably why those marriages failed. This is a girl who knew what she wanted and wasn't afraid to speak her piece. So my warning signals went off."

It was 1978. Zanuck was a forty-three-year-old second-generation Hollywood mogul with two daughters from his first marriage and two sons from his second. Lili, twenty-four, was working as an office manager for Carnation. The daughter of a Greek mother and an Italian-American father, Lili was named after her maternal grandmother, who at age twenty-nine was killed by the Nazis. Her father, who was in the U.S. Air Force and stationed overseas, insisted that Lili be born in America. "For only one reason," she says. "So that I could be president of the United States."

The family moved constantly, first living in Europe and then settling briefly in Florida when Lili was thirteen. She attended parochial school and, after a brief stint at college and a ninety-day marriage, decided to seek her fortune in Los Angeles. "I didn't have a game plan," she says. "But two things always motivate me: one, I don't like to be bored, and, two, I really hear the clock of life ticking. I don't feel I have this endless amount of time to live my life. I have a somewhat distorted view of loss and impending doom. I think that's because when I was twenty-one I had a very bad car accident. I was just sitting in the car talking and then I wasn't. I was hurt very badly and it took about a year for me to recover, and when I got a clean bill of health I moved to L.A."

Zanuck's father, Darryl, was Hollywood's last true tycoon, and little "Dickie," his only son, grew up selling *Saturday Evening Post*s and playing hide-and-seek on the Twentieth Century Fox lot, the studio his father built. At the age of twenty-four, Dick Zanuck produced his first film, *Compulsion*, and in 1962, at twenty-seven, he became the youngest production chief since Thalberg.

After his father fired him in a frenzy of paranoia and insecurity eight years later, Zanuck joined forces with Brown, a longtime friend, and together they produced critical and commercial blockbusters such as *The Sting* and *Jaws*.

Zanuck was dining with David Brown the day he first heard about Lili Fini. The late Pierre Groleau, Zanuck's weekly tennis partner and the co-owner of Ma Maison, then Hollywood's restaurant of choice, had met Lili when she and a girlfriend had begun frequenting the restaurant. Groleau proposed a blind date between her and Zanuck. "Pierre said, 'Dick, I must warn you. She's very bright,' " recalls Brown. "And for males of that era that meant she was not to be taken lightly. It meant she would have her demands. But Dick was the world's worst bachelor—he had no use for small talk and never appreciated the candy store that Hollywood is for men. He needs to be married, although this is a marriage that he never imagined."

After some initial reservations, mostly revolving around the voice ("It reminded me of Gravel Gertie"), he invited Lili to a screening at his home, and from that point on they were nearly inseparable.

Once they were married, Lili inherited an entirely new world. She became an instant mom: Zanuck had custody of his two sons, then five and six. "I lived in Dick's life then," she recalls. "Vacations were planned a year in advance. We'd go here, we'd do this, we'd eat here. It was like a machine and I effected no change for a long time."

as a real ball-breaker."

But one change did transpire almost instantly: Lili joined the Zanuck/Brown Company. "She came to see me alone at the George V hotel in Paris," Brown recalls. "She said, 'I want to work and I'm interested in films.' I then acted as an intermediary. I was her mentor and from the beginning I saw that Lili was a contender. She absorbed film lore as though she were a giant sponge. She knew every actor, every bit player in every TV show. Dick and I'd be talking about Spielberg, Redford, and Newman and she'd be talking about actors and directors on the cutting edge. She was a window on a world we no longer knew."

For two years, without pay, Lili worked her way up the ranks—from gofer to production assistant to development executive. "It was an easy thing, her working at the company," says Zanuck. "My father had given me a chance at an early age. He had this blind faith in me and I kind of projected that onto Lili. I knew that she would do a good job. And I also knew there'd be some arched eyebrows about her working with us, but that didn't bother me."

"People did talk about it," says one agent. "But that was before they met her. After you meet Lili, you quickly stop thinking about how she got the job."

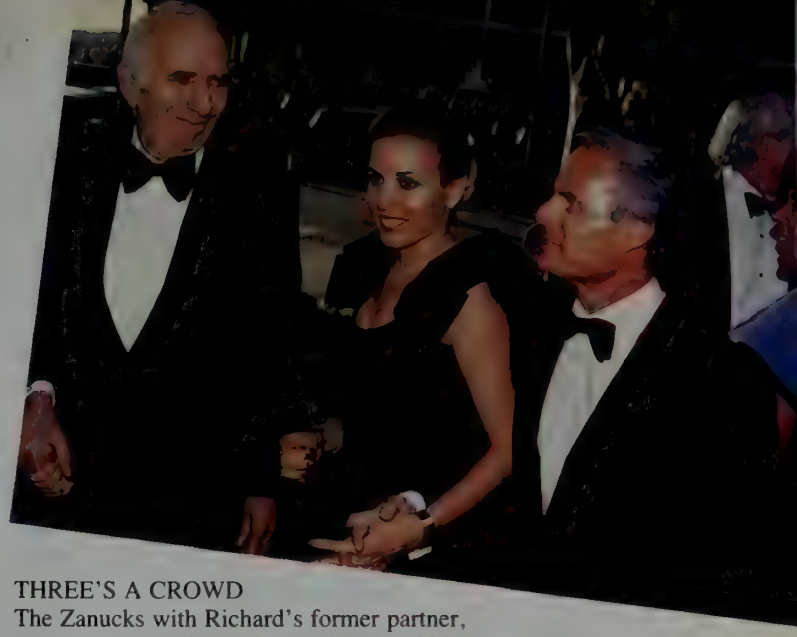
Characteristically, Lili also ignored the cries of nepotism coming from the Hollywood community. "You can always slot me—as Mrs. Richard Zanuck or whatever—but that's for somebody else's comfort, not for mine," she says. "It doesn't mean that people don't jump to certain conclusions, but those conclusions are irrelevant to me. And they always were."

When, in 1980, Lili discovered the germ of the idea that became *Cocoon*, Zanuck/Brown was actively developing *The Verdict* and *Neighbors*. "*Cocoon* was so inexpensive to option," Lili says now, "that it was O.K., they let me have it." Lili now had her baby: she developed the script and, with the encouragement of Alan Ladd Jr., a friend as well as a once and future studio head, asked her husband and David Brown for a producing credit on the picture. She got it.

Like most of Lili's projects, *Cocoon* took a long time to set up. In those days, before *E.T.* and *The Golden Girls*, a movie about old people and aliens did not strike the studios as the least bit commercially viable. "For four years, I made the same speech in front of the same desk to three different executives at Fox," says Zanuck. "And finally, in 1984, the third guy said yes."

Cocoon went on to gross $75 million—and to provoke a fissure in the company. As Lili's power grew, Brown, who was based in New York, felt increasingly shut out. In the spring of 1988, Brown decided to leave the partnership. As he wrote in his memoir, *Let Me Entertain You*, "I finally found myself with two partners instead of one, and they were sleeping together. This did not work for me as well as it did for them."

"I think now," says Zanuck, "that I wasn't as diplomatic about everything as I could have been. A lot of the things that David and I had been doing together for all those years I started transferring to Lili and became insensitive to David's feelings. People automatically started whispering about how Lili got rid of him, but really it was time. We had brought the partnership to its logical conclusion."



THREE'S A CROWD
The Zanucks with Richard's former partner, David Brown, left, on Oscar night in 1983.

Yet the *All About Eve*/Yoko Ono scenarios persist even today: Lili Zanuck is still perceived by many as the woman who broke up a wonderful and hugely successful partnership. "Lili is entitled to her future," says Brown rather philosophically. "I always saw her gifts. I just didn't know what her timetable was."

The attendant gossip was very difficult for Lili to ignore; for a while, she lost the ability to distance herself from the opinions swirling around the town. "I was devastated," she admits. "And it was pretty public. It was very painful for me.

"I think everything would have been fine if I'd just learned a little slower," she continues matter-of-factly. "If I could have kept my place. After *Cocoon*, I started to have an identity of my own within the company. People thought I was moving too fast—nobody knows how much I was really holding back." She pauses. "But now I think, What was the alternative? I shouldn't have been holding back at all."

It's two on a Saturday afternoon and Lili and four of *Rush*'s sound technicians are eating lunch at a fast-food restaurant that specializes in vegetarian hamburgers. "Did you see that story about the student who killed a fellow competitor and his professors because he didn't win a prize?" Lili is saying between bites of tuna-fish sandwich. "It was horrible. He shot them and then shot himself. All I kept thinking about was the Academy Awards—some screenwriter shouting, 'You put my script in turnaround!' and waving a gun." Lili laughs. "It could definitely happen," says one of the crew, and they all crack up. "Listen," Lili says, "there are times. . ."

But in fact, given the struggles she's gone through setting up each project, with the exception of the *Cocoon* sequel, Lili is remarkably free of bitterness. "Lili Zanuck fights harder to get movies made than any producer in town," says a former studio head. "On *Driving Miss Daisy*, she was as relentless as anyone I have ever witnessed." *Daisy*, the adaptation of Alfred Uhry's play, was a project David Brown had spotted even before it was produced Off Broadway. When he

left the partnership, the newly formed Zanuck Company decided to make *Daisy* its first film.

Although it was an inexpensive film, at $12.5 million, finding a studio to back it proved almost impossible. "We had been turned down by everyone at a certain echelon, and Dick kind of bailed," Lili recalls. "At that point, he felt humiliated enough around town and he said, 'This is getting embarrassing—we're being turned down by people I've never *heard* of.' He wanted to shelve the project. I could not do that."

Eventually, after the budget was knocked down to $7.5 million, her persistence paid off: they sold the foreign rights for $2.5 million to an independent producer, Jake Eberts, and Warner Bros. put up the remaining $5 million. The Academy Award for best picture and $106 million later, *Driving Miss Daisy* is, all things considered, the most profitable hit in the history of Warner Bros. Pictures.

"And then *everyone* liked it," says Lili. "You're almost resentful when they like it at that point. When we won the Golden Globes for *Daisy*, I looked into the audience and I saw all the people who had said no. And they're the same people who said no to *Rush*. There is no lesson that they learn."

Rush was the object of intense interest in Hollywood even as author Kim Wozencraft was still revising her novel, which is based on her experiences as an undercover cop who gets into trouble while working as a narcotics officer. (Wozencraft spent about a year in prison for falsifying evidence.) In the book, a female cop begins as an innocent, out to uphold the law, and winds up strung out on drugs and in an obsessive love affair with her partner. "I told the story to [producer] Dawn Steel," recalls Amanda Urban, Wozencraft's literary agent, "and she said, 'I'll option it now.' Dick Zanuck was calling me weekly from Atlanta, where they were filming *Daisy*, asking me if he could see it. [Producer] Scott Rudin was interested and so was nearly everyone else."

Somehow, the manuscript was leaked from Random House and that's when, as Urban says, "things whipped into a frenzy." When the smoke cleared, *Rush* had been sold to the Zanuck Company for a million dollars, a huge sum for a novel still in rough-draft form.

"I thought it was good drama," says Zanuck. "It was different and honest and very real." Robert Towne (*Shampoo, Chinatown*) agreed to write and direct, and Tom Cruise expressed interest in the part of Jim Raynor, the male lead. "We had a lot of meetings," Lili recalls. "Towne hasn't written a word, but there were a lot of meetings." When *Days of Thunder* started filming in late 1989, Towne asked for four weeks to work on that film. "We never saw him again," says Zanuck.

Pete Dexter (*Paris Trout*), who had written two other scripts for the Zanucks, was hired to adapt the book for the screen. "In the conversations with Pete, I found myself being very comfortable with how the story should be told," recalls Lili. "And somehow through that process, I got the idea to direct *Rush*."

Lili, in fact, had always longed to direct—David Brown claims she had spoken of wanting to direct *Driving Miss Daisy*—but she was fearful of telling even her husband about her desire. "Wanting to direct is a joke," she observes. "Who *doesn't* want to direct? *(Continued on page 143)*

White Lightning

Although her new album is called *Ritual of Love*, pop chameleon Karyn White may have to learn the rituals of superstardom instead. At twenty-six she has entered through the hallowed portals reserved for goddesses with one name, and although her look has constantly changed during the past few years, from Janet to Madonna to Diana, she is now ready to be Karyn. Who is that, exactly? A young woman who has taken her career by the balls, working on every aspect of her latest venture while marrying her producer, Terry Lewis of Jam and Lewis fame, along the way. White deftly switches from executive to vixen and back again, pulling her own strings, performing her own material, and manipulating her own image. Her changeable nature is the result of a simple work ethic: Do whatever it takes, and hit the right nerve. Three years ago, on her first time out, her song "Superwoman" scored with women who were tired of trying to do it all. Now she's telling us to turn off the lights and enjoy ourselves. To those who would dismiss her as just another pop star, she replies, "My songs become hits because they're real, whether it's about modern love or walking the dog." And while other ladies with one name are now covering her songs, what she really wants is for people to think of her as a nice person. But we'll call her Miss White, just to be on the safe side. —KIKI MASON

KARYN WHITE

"My songs become hits because they're real."

Photograph by MICHEL COMTE

Just Call Him STEVE

When the staid old-school directors of Time Inc. signed on with Warner baron Steve Ross as their new chairman, blue chip met poker chip in the media merger of the century. But did they really know whom they were getting? In an excerpt from *To the End of Time*, RICHARD M. CLURMAN reports on the controversial rise of the former funeral-home executive who became Bill Paley's son-in-law and the highest-paid C.E.O. of a public company in America

A CIRCUS MAXIMUS, one headline writer called it. *Variety*, the slangy bible of show biz, screamed, "NO BIGNESS LIKE SHOW BIGNESS. Ego, hostility, greed, fear and power-lust: Suddenly, [the] war over the singular prize of Time Inc. has all the elements of a silver screen epic."

Robert Lenzner, the experienced and usually restrained financial reporter, wrote that it was "the greatest spectacle in the history of the takeover game. The epic proportions of the drama attracted Wall Street's investment bankers sweeping the world for bidders and big bucks, while the legal eagles invent new offensive and defensive strategies." *USA Today* weighed in with "Henry Luce wouldn't be very happy. Time Inc., Luce's beloved empire, is on the block like a side of beef." On the *CBS Evening News*, the sums of money involved were described as just about equaling "the total U.S. foreign-aid program in 1989."

What was all the shouting about? Only the creation of the biggest media empire ever, the corporate interfaith marriage of sixty-seven-year-old Time Inc., a Waspy, blue-chip American institution, for years the largest combined magazine and book publisher on earth, to Steven J. Ross's poker-chip Warner Communications Inc., the swinging pop-entertainment conglomerate, whose movies and sounds of music ricochet around the world.

Warner and Time were as different from each other—in their people and their products—as the scrappy old Brooklyn Dodgers and the haughty old New York Yankees. Different leagues, different managers, different fans—same hometown.

Ross and many of his cohorts had risen impressively from the mean streets of New York, arriving from all over the career map at what became Warner Communications. Most of the Time crowd had different histories. Their early playing fields were often the campuses of the Ivy League, then up the ladder, rung by rung, on the tidy organization chart of Time Inc. When the two companies and two cultures came together, some considered it a metaphor for the American Dream of cultural pluralism annealed in the corporate melting pot.

What was really notable about the marriage was that

Illustration by RISKO

Rasko

Time's executives and twelve outside directors, who were so full of doubts about Ross when they got engaged, still knew little about him when they wed. None had known him except distantly. Of the dozen outside Time directors who agreed to make Ross their new chairman and co-C.E.O., only one on the combined Time Warner board had ever taken the trouble to meet with him (at one dinner) before the final deal was completed. But for that single encounter, the outside directors of Time Inc. chose Ross to be their chairman and leader for the next ten years, and co-C.E.O. for at least five, without ever talking to him first.

The three Time executives who negotiated the deal (chairman J. Richard Munro, president Nicholas J. Nicholas, and vice-chairman Gerald M. Levin—pronounced like "begin") spent hours with him, but they knew Ross only in the most superficial way. They had volumes of numbers and analysis on the deal itself, but only the sketchiest knowledge of Ross. What they knew of his personality, strengths, and weaknesses they gleaned from his wooing ways in face-to-face observation. They never informed themselves by seriously seeking the scores of people—many unabashed admirers—who could have filled out the picture of the man whom they agreed to take in as their seniormost partner.

It's not as if Ross had led a quiet, uneventful life. But they never inquired, for example, into S.E.C. files concerning the collapse of Atari, Warner's most profitable division in the early eighties, and the insider trading in Warner stock that occurred right before its downfall. They had only the dimmest knowledge of his fierce battles with media baron Rupert Murdoch or investor Herbert J. Siegel. Nor did they know anything of the quick departure of every one of Ross's top executives. Or the criminal scandal and convictions surrounding gangland's Westchester Theatre, in which Warner was involved. Ross was listed as a "co-conspirator," but availed himself of his Fifth Amendment rights so that he would not have to testify before the grand jury. All the Time people knew was that he was never indicted and that the criminal investigation of him was finally dropped.

Had they inquired about the affair, the information they could have unearthed about Ross was not faded old stuff. It had been collected afresh after an eight-year-long investigation commissioned by Warner's own board and reported in a secret 663-page document in May 1986—one year before the Time Warner merger talks began. Known as "the Armstrong Report," it concerned the criminal fraud for which one Warner consultant had gone to jail; Ross's top lieutenant and closest friend had admitted guilt; and Warner's assistant treasurer, who handled Ross's personal accounts, had been convicted of fraud, racketeering, and perjury. The report, which seriously questioned Ross's "credibility," could have been made available to Time by just asking Warner for it.

Key Time executives and board members say they didn't ask, because it might have been "embarrassing" to Ross. "Steve is such a sensitive soul," one of them explained, and another added that it might have "killed the deal."

Had the Time executives and outside directors asked and found out these and other easily obtainable facts and insights about Ross and the history of his management, maybe it wouldn't have mattered to them. Nor might it have made any difference to know that Ross's recollections of his World War II service, college degree, pro-football experiences, and other milestones in his autobiography were the products of his own imagination. Perhaps it would have seemed irrelevant. They liked and admired Ross and his company for other reasons. Ask Ross what the most important thing to know about him is and he responds proudly with a homily that he repeatedly expressed to the Time executives: "More important than anything else is that my word is my bond."

Many a biographer and journalist has made the mistake of recording flaws and foibles of a subject without taking the measure of his accomplishments. Ross's life is the stuff of a Warner Bros. melodrama: a lead character of undeniable talents rising from a sports-slacks salesman and funeral greeter to become a pop-entertainment Medici. Then he became the leader of the most visible media conglomerate in the world.

But a writer or reporter from any one of Time's magazines would have been severely chastised or fired for turning in even a short profile of Ross based on the scant insight and information Time's board and top executives had before the merger. Ross says he was willing, even eager, to meet with the Time directors, but they never asked him. The answers to their initial doubts and questions would have been readily available to them. Had they seriously inquired, they might have been surprised.

Across Sixth Avenue, down the street from the Time & Life Building, past granite walls, manicured flower beds, and roaring fountains, stands the Warner Communications Building, at 75 Rockefeller Plaza, in the older part of the complex. No one spoke aloud of succession there, unlike at Time, where the topic of who would succeed whom provided never-ending collegial anguish. At Warner, Steven J. Ross was in charge.

By the late seventies, Ross had built the company in less than twenty years from a mixed—and mixed-up—collection of ventures into an international leader in movies, records, popular publishing, and cable. When he started out, Ross knew more about the opportunities on the streets of New York than Broadway or Hollywood Boulevard. As important to his success as his intricate deal-making talent was his beguiling "charm." That was the word everyone used to describe him. A weekend neighbor and friend, Steven Spielberg, made a picturesque comparison from his landmark movie. "I think of Steve as a six-foot-three-inch E.T."

At Warner, "Ross" and "boss" more than rhymed. No one ever disputed that. Warner without Ross was almost unthinkable to his chorus of well-paid operating managers and aides. Nor did they hint in his presence that they wanted it any other way. After noisy disagreements and four-letter-word clashes, salted with Yiddish argot, they would recite in public the company's anthem: "We love Steve Ross"—"love" was always the verb—"he's like a father to us."

At Time Inc. in those days, love on the premises was more often the high-tension emotion of interoffice affairs than a term of endearment for bosses. But Ross was different. Deals and endearment were his lifelong game. He was a hugger, a kisser (of men and women), a wooer. "Heartfelt"

is his favorite adjective for toasts. His largess of spirit and pocketbook for the chosen knew few bounds. Ross had a mission, different from but as driving as anyone's at Time. He wanted—needed—to be loved, successful, and, by all kinds of benefactions, large and small, to hold sway over those around him. "Steve was a charming host, a slightly uncomfortable guest," one of his now departed office claque says.

He was truly known only to his family and the executives who worked with him closely, some from the beginning. Their feelings and views were refracted through a prism of affection, awe, and suspicion. To discuss their insights outside their circle was considered an act of disloyalty, a risk few would take. Most who really know him speak candidly about Ross only behind a shield of anonymity. "We all sort of plead the Fifth Amendment when you ask us about Steve," says one of them.

"No one from Warner," says the company's accomplished music impresario, Ahmet Ertegün, who heads the Atlantic Records Group, "will say anything to outsiders that's critical of Steve. He takes such good care of everybody." Ertegün, for example, says, "I would never leave Steve. Everybody has always offered me big deals. Now I just go in to Steve when my contract is up and say, 'Here's what my lawyer says I should ask you for. But I'm telling you if you don't give it to me I'm staying anyway.' "

Another Ross intimate, who has watched him admiringly at every phase of his life, says of him, "Steve got his training in business from working for his father-in-law at funeral parlors, where he met you on the worst day of your life. The day when your parents or your children or your loved ones dropped dead. He was there to make you feel good. And he learned how to do that better than anyone in the world because he had the best training in the world. He took that ability into show business and made it work better than anyone I've ever seen in my entire life. He would carry your bags, light your cigarettes, open the door, smother you with gifts, let you use the company's airplanes, overtip all the time, listen to your life story no matter how bored he was, without telling you anything about himself. You need a word beyond just 'obsequious' to describe him."

David Geffen, the precocious and stormy entertainment whiz who defected from Warner in 1991 and made close to a billion dollars after selling his company to competing MCA, had worked under Ross for twenty-three years. Geffen once said to him in the midst of one of their many disputes, "Steve, do *not* light my cigarette. It's costing me too much."

A moment in Time: New partners Nicholas J. Nicholas, Steve Ross, and J. Richard Munro.

The Time executives who negotiated the deal had only the sketchiest knowledge of Ross.

When Ross started to collect the companies that became Warner Communications, they were a motley lot that defied definition.

His company developed from his father-in-law's Riverside funeral parlor ("expanded service with traditional dignity") and limousines into the Kinney Service Corporation, named after Kinney Street, around the corner from its first Newark office. Kinney's divisions and subsidiaries came and went almost as fast as cars in its parking lots.

Its bosses referred irreverently to the funeral part of their business as "our permanent-parking division." But Kinney's central engine was an array of stock swaps, acquisitions, successes, failures, spin-offs, warrants, mergers, buyouts, tax write-offs, trades, or whatever deal device was handy, inching by chance toward coherence. "There were few conventional acquisitions," one of Ross's marveling lawyers remembers. "There's almost no deal we did that we weren't creating new tax laws. It was heady stuff."

After the funeral parlors and limousines came car rentals; parking lots; hotel-, hospital-, and office-cleaning companies (including a contract to tidy up Rockefeller Center—RCA's David Sarnoff was the uncle of one of Ross's early executives); printing; drywall partitions; real estate; security guards; painting and plumbing contracting; window washing; comic books (*Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman*); *Mad* magazine; licensing (cartoon characters and sports memorabilia); movie

cameras (Panavision); newsstand periodical distribution; a New Jersey bank; paperback books; data processing. Close to 160 Kinney-whatever units in the conglomerate. Kinney called itself "the Servicemakers—a unique one-stop shopping complex for banking, corporate, institutional and real estate communities."

The go-go 1960s found Kinney going at high speed. Ross's crazy quilt of companies was growing and prospering. But a service company—what was that? Even Wall Street couldn't figure it out. Then, in 1967, with advice from a few of his corporate friends, Ross bought a Hollywood talent agency named Ashley Famous, which had deep roots in the movie and TV business. Its boss, Ted Ashley, an able executive, pointed Ross to a decaying Hollywood movie company, Warner–Seven Arts. Its film department was ailing, but, barely visible at first to Ross, it had a successful popular-records business. Ross grabbed the package. With Ashley at its head, the company started making hit films again (*Summer of '42, Klute, A Clockwork Orange, Dirty Harry, The Exorcist*) and restored the legendary Warner Bros. name.

In the years following, his high-rolling acquisition bent had few limits. Leisure and entertainment was a broad charter. He built Jungle Habitat, a New Jersey animal park, which was a disaster. That "dispelled forever," remembers one of Ross's sharp-tongued former cronies, "the popular illusion that lions eat only Christians." Ross collected Knickerbocker Toys, a major interest in the Pittsburgh Pirates, Malibu Grand Prix (auto racetracks), Ralph Lauren perfume and cosmetics, and the moribund New York Cosmos soccer team, which he brought to life by paying the Brazilian soccer superstar Pelé millions to join the roster. He tried two-way pay-TV in Columbus, Ohio (QUBE), MTV, Nickelodeon, the new Atari video games. All are gone from Warner's group now, all but one—its cable-TV franchises.

Ross was acclaimed for his daring and generosity. To oblige itinerant visitors and executives, he later bought five Trump Tower apartments, an air force of planes and helicopters, and the Villa Eden in Acapulco, a memorable full-service retreat perched high on a hill overlooking the resort's harbor. In Ross's New York office, the conference table for the executive suite was so big and shiny that one of his top managers closed a meeting with the wisecrack "We've got to clear out of here by noon so the Rangers can use the table for hockey practice." Ross was hanging out with Frank Sinatra, Barbra Streisand, Spielberg, and Clint Eastwood. His business was booming. He was a hero to Wall Street and his stockholders. He was courting presidents of the United States and a governor of New York.

Little did he or anyone else know he was on the edge of becoming the leading character in a drama that would have taxed Hollywood's most mournful tragedian.

Time's leadership-succession process was as judicious and balanced as a 5–4 Supreme Court decision. Steve Ross's history during the same period in the late seventies and early eighties reads more like a Greek tragedy. Ross had a series of disasters. Only the first involved his succession.

Under chairman Ross, Warner never had a chief operating officer. "I'm not a manager," Ross says. "I'm more of a dreamer." His management style, explains someone who has experienced it, "is not hands-off. That's misleading. He inspires rather than runs or curtails. He's in many ways a Jewish mother. Some people *appear* to be generous. He really is."

But he couldn't face elevating one of his four top headquarters executives at the risk of losing the affection of the others. Below his sovereign throne he also resisted bureaucratic layers of command. To fudge both problems, Ross set up a four-man Office of the President (there was *no* president), all four vying for his attention. "They were not the best people in the world," says an ex–Warner executive who knew them all, "but they were devoted to Steve, as I still am. Steve always picked people who were completely within his control." Each of the four was in charge of overseeing financially the impresarios who ran Warner's creative and other divisions. Within a few years, in a series of personal and corporate thunderclaps, all four would be gone, none retired.

While they were still there, it was a dazzling life. "So overwhelming," one of them remembers. "When I left the office to go on a trip to the Coast, my driver didn't take me to LaGuardia, which is fifteen minutes away. He took me to the helicopter so I shouldn't have to—God forbid—get in some traffic. The helicopter would take me right onto the field where the plane was, a steward and all those things waiting. So you go on your own plane and you are picked up by a limo at the other end, driven to the Beverly Hills Hotel, and you get into Bungalow 10, with four bedrooms, where you're alone or with two other people. Then you walk into a movie studio where you're kind of a king. And you're telling me our life didn't change—these little guys from Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the Bronx!"

The youngest and newest arrival to the quartet was thirty-five-year-old Ken Rosen, handsome and dark-haired, whose father had wrenched himself from Manhattan's Lower East Side ghetto to become a modestly successful lawyer and a politically connected administrative judge. Rosen was a fast-moving deal-maker. "Around Steve he was deferential and always looking for direction," says a contemporary. "With others, he was developing into a sort of Steve Ross Jr."

He came to Ross's attention early, as an acquisitions specialist in the Ashley Famous Artists deal. Ross kept his eye on Rosen as he cut a small swath through the financial side of entertainment investments. When Ross brought him to Warner, it was to do mergers and acquisitions. He quickly became Ross's constant companion and protégé, "the younger brother Steve didn't have," says one friend. Carmen Ferragano, Ross's longtime assistant, told a reporter that "Kenny absolutely worshiped Steve, and I think Steve was receptive to being worshiped." Rosen's executive companions in the new Office of the President were drawn to the apparent crown prince but jealous of his close relationship with Ross.

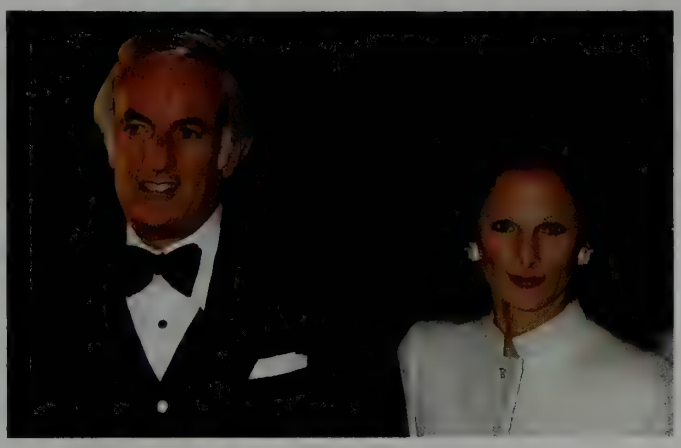
"Kenny helped us all," one of them says. "Under Steve's wing, he showed us how to live." Soon they all had extravagant contracts with a rondo of short-term and long-term bonuses, incentive stock plans, and severance insurance that would convert the pain of leaving into an

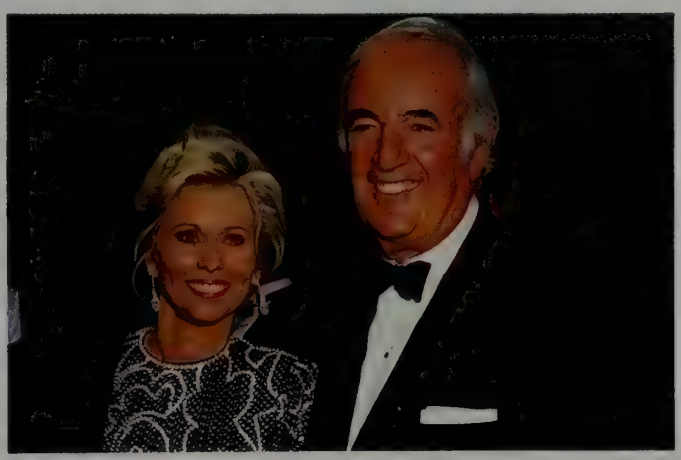
enriching experience. These were not just severance packages, recalls another of the four, "they were more like suitcases or steamer trunks." One of their compensation consultants, who fled in dismay, describes the executive-enrichment process with all its new gimmicks as "lowering the top of the tennis net from its regulation height to two inches from the ground."

Ross remembers the period with melancholia. "I started to groom Ken Rosen to be the president. I had no real replacement. In 1976 I negotiated four contracts with the men in the Office of the President. Ken was fifteen years younger than the other three. This is the scary part of it. He was the *only* one—they all got the same contract—who wanted a clause for disability. That was in November. The contract started January 1, 1977."

Three months later, on Sunday, April 3, Rosen was riding the Central Park bridle paths. His horse suddenly bolted and Rosen plunged headfirst into a tree. He was near death, in a coma for months. Ross rarely left Rosen's bedside. "Steve would actually shake him out of his semi-consciousness," one friend remembers. "Steve talked him alive" was the sentimental consensus. A Ross business confidant told a reporter, "Steve loved Kenny and I also think he's addicted to helping people. He relaxes from his own problems by helping others, and he gets satisfaction from being needed."

Today, Rosen, fifty, lives in Innisfree Village, a family-style collection of cottages for the mentally handicapped, seventeen miles outside Charlottesville, Virginia, nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains.





"If there's a Rosebud in Steve's life, it will take you back to Amanda": Ross with Amanda Burden (*above*) and his third wife, Courtney Sale (*below*).

At Time Inc., the generation of new managers in the eighties had never really known their company's founder, Henry R. Luce. At Warner, even though Ross owned less than 1 percent of its stock, the company was dominated by his personality and the roller coaster of his life. Like every other Warner trip, the company's odyssey through the seventies and eighties was as much personal as it was corporate. It is impossible to know Warner—past or present—without knowing Steve Ross in a more personal way than chronicles of business usually demand.

"Why," wonders a member of his family, "is it that Steve is the only mogul uncomfortable on the top of his mountain?"

To most casual observers of Ross in action, he is an exemplar of self-assurance, charm, command, with the grace of a man in possession of his success, abundantly offering his own blanket of security to those around him. One longtime intimate explains, "Steve gets loyalty. The people who work for him swear by him and they'll jump off mountains in order to please Steve Ross because he makes damn sure they get rewarded for what they do." One of his former executives explains the jump in a different way. "His relationships with people are a combination of incredible sincerity and total insincerity. If Steve told me to go jump out the window, I would, not because I'd do whatever Steve told me, but because I'd know there would be a safety net two floors below."

Yet there is another Steve Ross—as there is another everybody. Ross himself is enclosed in a protective wall by his staff. He is a master of sizzle and ballyhoo, yet his Warner operation has been a fortress of silence and secrecy. "We do a terrible job P.R.-wise," says Ross. "Primarily I'm the reason. I don't give interviews. Newspapers get angry. Magazines get angry. So finally I give an interview and we make a hundred more enemies." (He was interviewed extensively for this report.)

When a reporter recently and routinely asked for Ross's prepared bio (every C.E.O. has one), he was told, "We're working on it." Eight weeks later it arrived in its latest version, without a word about the man himself, only about his company. The lead sentence said, "It is almost impossible to separate the 20-year history of Warner Communications Inc. from the business career of Steven J. Ross."

"I think everybody is afraid of being found out," says one longtime Ross admirer, "except those people who finally decide that they are who they invented themselves to be. Steve is extraordinary at those things he's good at—making you want to be his friend, his ability to work financial magic, making you feel that you have a privileged and a special relationship with him. Actually, there's no such thing as being close to Steve, because nobody's really close. On some level he's a visionary. But it's odd. He obviously doesn't think very highly of himself. You can see it in the way he behaves, he holds himself, the way he constantly services people."

Ross tells his own life story earnestly, with the belief and conviction reinforced by repetition. Separating the facts from the fiction requires more excavating than merely asking. Even more than with most fabulists who star in their own

imaginative scripts, Ross appears to believe the stories he tells about his own life. He seems to embrace whatever tales he once told no matter how incorrect they are.

The Flatbush section of Brooklyn, where Steve Ross was born on September 19, 1927, was populated largely by Jewish immigrant families, most living on marginal incomes in solid two-story row houses, a neighborhood where young boys played stick- and stoopball on tree-lined streets. They were characterized in *The New Crowd*, a lively account of the roots of Jewish success in America, as "the first-born sons of middle-income or working-class families headed by a self-employed father. They were expected to do far better than their parents, most of whom were immigrants or the children of immigrants—many from Eastern Europe."

Young Steve fit the specs perfectly. His father, the son of Russian and Alsatian immigrants, at first earned a good living in the homebuilding business. When the 1929 stock-market crash and the Depression hit, Ross's family was left penniless. They moved from their house on Carroll Street to a small apartment building on Newkirk Avenue, surrounded by brownstones. In 1932, when young Steve was in kindergarten, his father changed the family name from Rechnitz to Ross, in order to get a job as an oil-burner salesman. "He couldn't get a job with that name, so he changed it," Ross says.

"We were poor, poor," Ross remembers. "Sometimes we had rolls for dinner—and that was it." But his proud, dignified mother, he says, always insisted on having finger bowls on the table, symbolic to him of a self-esteem that she engraved on his memory. She also had strict rules about good manners. "If I ever sat down before my mother or my sister and I didn't help them by holding their chair, I didn't have that roll. My mother taught me dignity and self-respect. When you grow up in the Depression and on the streets, you always remember."

Ross attended nearby P.S. 152, on Glenwood Road, then later Erasmus high school. (In those days New York City had the best public-school system in the U.S.) He was, even then, a mixture of shyness and overconfidence. Young Steve was well liked by teachers, who remembered his best subject was math.

After his father began to pull himself out of the hardship of the Depression years, he and his wife decided "for the children's sake" to move to "the city," i.e., Manhattan, a nickel subway ride away but a big step up. With his family still unable to afford the tuition, Steve transferred, on an athletic scholarship, he says, to the predominantly Jewish Columbia Grammar School, where "you could meet new people."

Already over six feet, Steve played varsity football, baseball, and basketball. He was elected vice president of the student council and a member of the junior-prom committee, where his flair on the dance floor made him a natural. He was co-winner in the vote for "most popular" boy in his senior class. In the yearbook, Steve's way with the girls was attested to by a joking reference to him as "the noted bigamist."

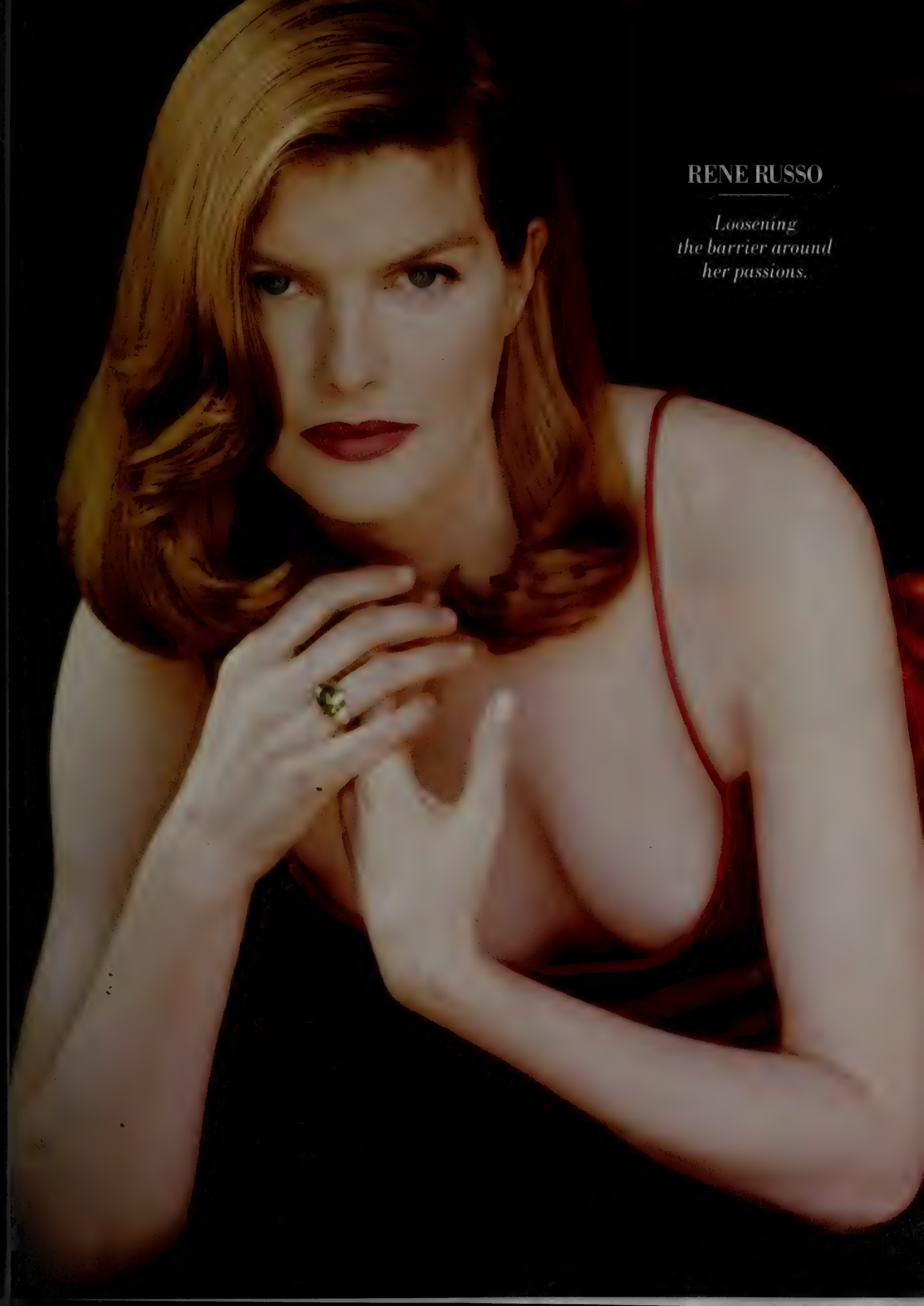
Ross graduated from Columbia Grammar in June 1945, three months short of the World War II draft age. He has often told friends he "lied" about his age when he was fifteen so that he could get into *(Continued on page 122)*

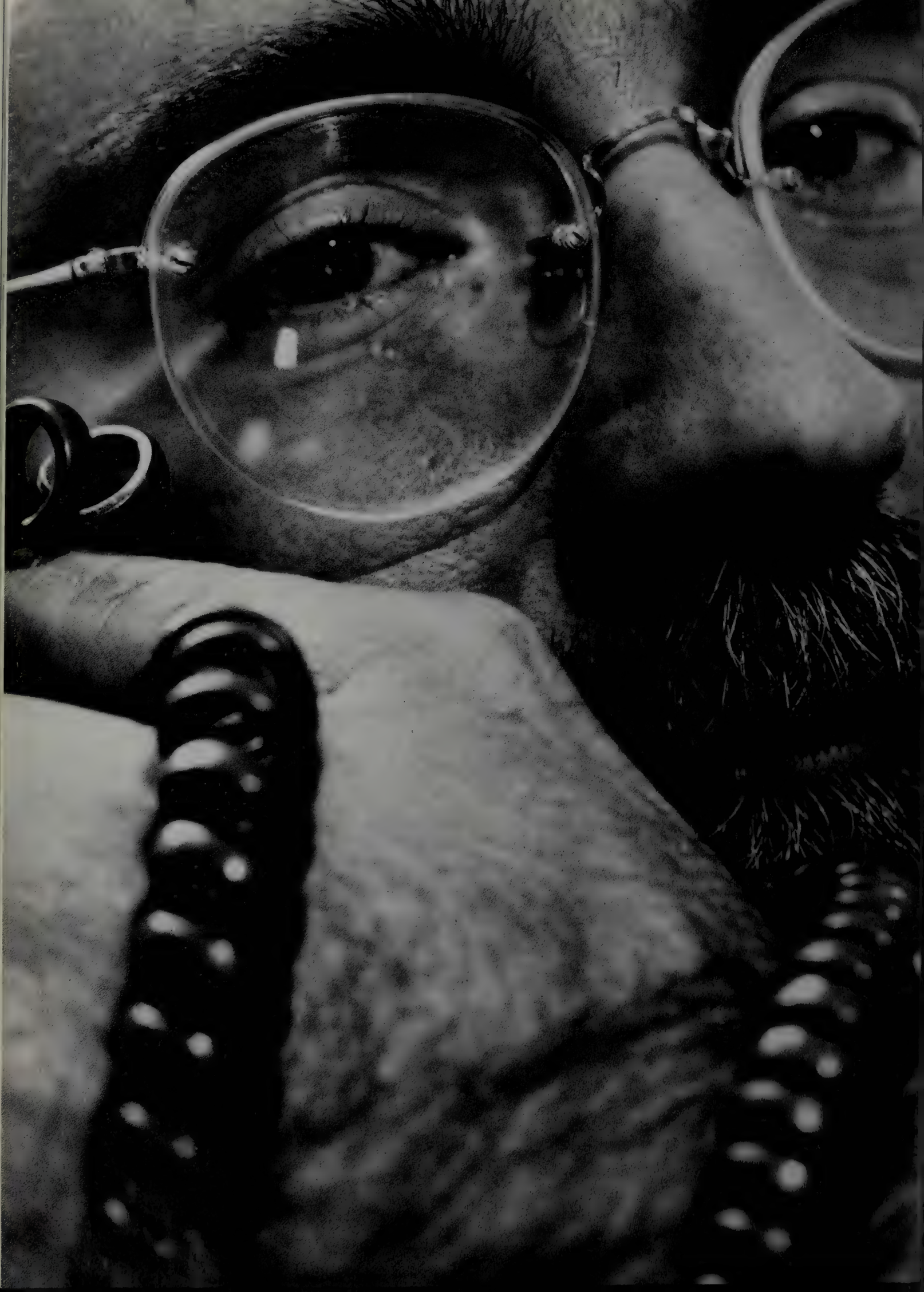
Rising Russo

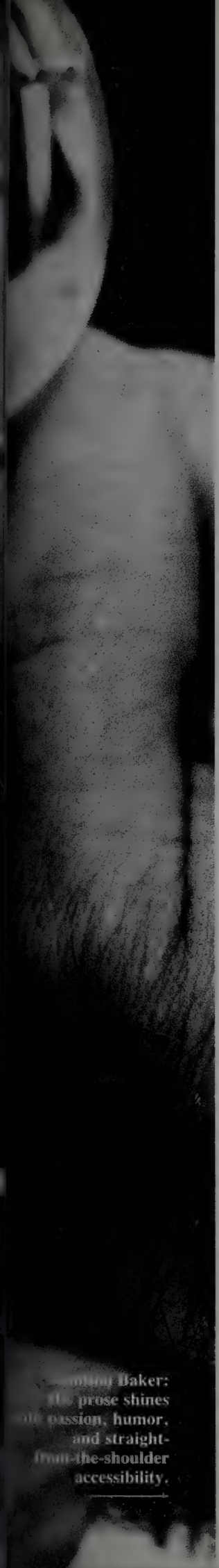
Do models dream at night, or do they switch off like computers? Is it sleep they experience, or downtime? Seeing them swank across the page or through a flashbulb gauntlet, it's difficult to believe they suffer the same doubts, fears, and dark imaginings that rob lesser mortals of rest. So little of street-level life seems to reach their high nostrils. It's this inability to suggest an inner deep that makes the transition from modeling to movies iffy. Rene Russo may prove an exception. A native of beautiful downtown Burbank, Russo became the top draw in Eileen Ford's stable while still a teen. Along with providing sleek cleavage as a frequent *Cosmo* cover girl, she was a beacon to younger models such as Brooke Shields, whom she appeared with in *Vogue*. But unlike Shields, Russo has been able to squeak out an adult movie career. She was a lustrous librarian in *Major League*, a Soothing Presence opposite the overcaffeinated Michael Keaton in *One Good Cop*, a dream bride in purple lingerie in *Mr. Destiny*. As a child, Russo wore a body cast for curvature of the spine, and there's still something caged about her on-screen, a guardrail around her passions. Her next roles ought to loosen that barrier. This month she appears with old rubber lips himself, Mick Jagger, in the sci-fi *Freejack*. And this summer she dodges bullets and wisecracks with Mel Gibson in *Lethal Weapon 3*. It'll be interesting to see what resources she has, once her composure's been ruffled.

—JAMES WOLCOTT

Photograph by FIROOZ ZAHEDI


RENE RUSSO
Loosening
the barrier around
her passions.





HOT *VOX*

Novelist Nicholson Baker has built up a cult following with his minutely detailed books *The Mezzanine*, *Room Temperature*, and *U and I*. Next, he explores the mysteries of phone sex in his upcoming novel, *Vox*, which is already one of the most-talked-about titles of the year.

JAMES KAPLAN reports

Near the end of Nicholson Baker's third and latest novel, *Vox*—a brief, hilarious, insistently sensual, ferociously inventive paean to phone sex—the book's male lead postulates the existence of a remarkable device, the Bionic Mmmm-Detector. The Detector "looks like an antique pocket watch, it's gold, with a cover, but when you open it, instead of the dial, there is this mysterious fluid...that glows in several colors when the right conditions are met..." The right conditions being the proximity of a masturbating woman. An *intelligent* masturbating woman.

Vox, clearly, is no ordinary porn book, but then, Nicholson Baker is hardly an ordinary writer. If, in fact, there were an artistic version of the Detector, a device that signaled the culture-distorting presence of new literary brilliance, it would point straight to the farm country south of Rochester, New York, where Nicholson Baker lives.

Not since *Portnoy's Complaint* has this kind of imagination (and writing gift) turned itself to sex. (There aren't many male sex writers around who would—or could—refer to the *membrum virile* as "my Werner Heisenberg.") And even if Baker works a

Photograph by JONATHAN BECKER

smaller canvas than Roth—or than anyone else around; he is, ostensibly, a kind of micro-miniaturist—that doesn't make him less special. In an American book-writing generation that seems to span the talent gamut from A to C, Nicholson Baker is out there at the end of the alphabet, quite alone. His unmistakable voice, his razor-sharp comprehension of culture high and low, his mighty-Wurlitzer-like skill with the language—all move him out of the lit pack, straight into suede-elbow proximity with the timeless ones, the *echt* practitioners. It is not necessarily comfortable territory.

There is, for one thing, the matter of *Vox*'s subject, which will automatically get Baker noticed as he has never been noticed before, for all the right and wrong reasons. If Nicholson Baker had any prior visibility, it was as a superlatively strange chronicler of the infinitesimally quotidian, the man who gave us, in fanatical particular, modern office life (in *The Mezzanine,* 1988), father- and husbandhood (*Room Temperature,* 1990), and his obsession with John Updike (*U and I,* 1991). The bearded, bald, bespectacled young author stares at us from his dust jackets like a perky, quizzical chicken, the picture of an egghead. What's this man doing writing about phone sex?

"I've always wanted to be a pornographer myself," Baker says thoughtfully. "The difficulty has been finding a form that would make it be pornography along with something that you might want to read again. That has some artful dimension." He is a monumentally shy, perilously tall person, considerably older-looking than his thirty-five years, with a pleasant, baffled-professor mien, a wry, Keilloresque speaking voice, and a nice, folksy, upstate way about him. We're sitting in the living room of the Victorian house Baker shares with his wife and young daughter, on a tree-lined rural street well out of literary harm's way. Like his idol Updike, he has chosen a relatively isolated life, in the kind of country town that has a shiny veneer of innocence. Just on the outskirts stands a large billboard that reads: PORNOGRAPHY VICTIMIZES WOMEN AND CHILDREN. An ominous note?

"This is a very sensitive town to all that," Baker says, with a small smile. "See, that in itself is, I think, sexy. Still, at the supermarket and drugstore, you're gonna see this rack of romance novels," Baker says. "And romance novels are, in my flexible use of the word, pornography. They are meant to move and entertain, and also to arouse. In this part of the world, people have orgasms, just like anywhere else. And here are these Silhouette Desire books to help the cause."

It was one such romance, *Beginner's Luck,* written by one Dixie Browning, that inspired Baker in the first place. "It's the only one I've read all the way through," Baker says. "It's about this somewhat klutzy, nearsighted, bearded scientific type, who is discovered somehow in the woods by this woman, who sees his secret passionate side, and gets him to shave off his beard." He smiles.

"I don't like the word 'erotica' very much. It just seems a kind of uncomfortable word. 'Erotica' might be defined as, you know, pornography that doesn't turn you on."

Vox safely avoids that genteel category. *Pace* the anti-porn activists, *pace* Baker himself, *Vox* pretty much avoids categories altogether. The book consists entirely of a love-line dialogue between a man in a western city and a woman in an eastern city, moving in and out of their respective, spectacularly imaginative fantasies to an entirely satisfactory climax. (Not since *Portnoy,* either, has masturbation gotten so fair a shake—only Baker has democratically extended the territory across genders, even inventing a new, unisex word for the activity: "strumming." "My *dream,*" he says, "would be that 'strum' enters the vocabulary.")

It is a quite extraordinary, quite short (166 pages) narrative, by turns touching, weird, very funny, and intensely erotic. To the probable frustration of militant feminists, it contains some of the most even-handed—as it were—sex writing ever written. Baker is clearly a man who reveres women—as witness the strength of his female lead's voice, and the lively verisimilitude of her fantasies, fantasies which Baker claims he researched among women of his acquaintance. To the probable frustration, also, of dirty-word haters everywhere, the book achieves between its two geographically distanced protagonists the kind of intimacy that all of us, from Bible-thumpers to leather fanciers, yearn for. *Vox* is that rarest of rarities: a warm turn-on.

"I've always wanted to be a pornographer myself. The difficulty has been finding a form that would make it be pornography along with something that you might want to read again."

"I've never really *liked* sex scenes in books," Baker says. "You're reading along, you're interested by the social nuances, there's all kinds of threads in play. And all of a sudden you're *in a sex scene*. And these—time-tested words are in play. And your reptile brain takes over. It's almost as if the writer's cheating. It's like an awkward shifting of gears. And then you get through the sex scene, and you're supposed to take up again with the social nuance and stuff.

"So I didn't ever write sex scenes, for that reason. It just didn't feel right. Instead of writing books that had no sex in them, I decided to just sort of turn the thing around completely—to write a book that was *entirely* about sex. The exciting discovery to me was that I could have two strangers talking over the phone so that they would *have* to be talking about sex. I mean, they'd have to be *having* sex and talking about sex at the *same time*. So it was a perfect social structure for a novel. Because if the two of them were side by side, there would be a certain amount of information exchanged through other senses.

"But since they are over the phone, the humanity of their

situation is so fragile that they have to rely entirely on language, and on their ability to construct scenes and to entertain each other verbally just to keep the thing from seeming, you know, tragically alienated.

"I mean, the book is in some ways a fantasy. Given two reasonably intelligent people, willing to have sort of the conversation of their lives, what form would it take? At what point would they dip in and out of arousal? Where would the sexual nature of what they were talking about take over, and then where would they get distracted back into talking about some *point* they wanted to make? That was the plot—the little loops that the conversation would take.

"But I felt that in a way I was writing a romance novel. In the sense that a romance novel is so pared down. It's basically two people, they meet, and there's some hurdles that they overcome, then there's a clinch at the end. And that's basically what happens here—it just happens that the two characters have a piece of plastic at their ear the whole time."

U and I is a short, dense fever dream of a book (although that makes it sound less funny than it really is), the attempt of a young writer saddled with towering talent and intellect to place himself in an uncaring literary landscape, and to wrestle himself out from underneath a colossus possessed of similar talent and intellect but far greater achievement. It succeeds on both counts. (And, all its self-deprecation aside, no other young novelist on the scene today could think of attempting anything like it.) At one point in the book, while still in college, Baker asks his wife-to-be if *she* thinks he's a better writer than Updike.

"I think you're smarter than he is, but that he's a better writer than you are," she said.

I nodded slowly, wounded, but pleased by her brave willingness, in the name of truth, to inflict such a wound and to muffle it so cleverly with a giant, distracting compliment. She thought I was smarter than Updike—I could live with that! Smarts, pure octane. I would go to the moon with them.

Pure-octane-wise, not many are in Baker's league. He is, seemingly alone of his TV-nurtured writing generation, a real intellectual, with a broad, jaw-droppingly knotty matrix of usable reference, a true *réseau,* reaching across literature, music, mathematics, natural science, high technology, and product design, and making heartfelt and knowledgeable reference to such masters as Proust, Debussy, Aldus Manutius, William James, and William Edward Hartpole Lecky (*History of European Morals*). Then, too, there is the matter of his alley-oop vocabulary: morsels such as "florilegia," "esemplastic," "instauration," "stretto," "tephra," and "columbarium" dot his pages like raisins in rice pudding.

Yet Baker is no mere wonk. Charming references to popular culture (*The Man from U.N.C.L.E.;* McDonald's; Revell warplane models) aside, his prose shines with passion, humor, and straight-from-the-shoulder accessibility. He isn't the smart kid who holes up in the science lab all day; he's the one who helps the other guys make stink bombs.

He grew up fairly normal in Rochester, New York—or as normal as it was possible to be, given parents who had met as art students at Parsons School of Design, who lacked standard suburban values (money wasn't particularly important to them), and who were eager to share their spiritual and artistic ideas with their son and daughter. His mother, who came from Quaker forebears, "would always have projects—she would teach us drawing," Baker says. A typical lesson was to draw the interior of a pillow. And his father, an advertising man, "always included us if he had a copywriting assignment. He would ask us for suggestions, and try things out on us. He never ended up taking our suggestions, but it was very exciting to feel that you could actually influence the theme for Kodak's Starfiche reader-printer."

Unconventionality came easily to Baker. Like other boys his age, he built models of planes and cars, but with a slightly bent agenda. "I used to put the propeller cowlings onto the doors of the Corvettes, and I put the little induction scoops from the '57 Chevy or whatever on the wing of the plane," he says. "It didn't seem good enough to build the model airplane that was in the box. The idea was to come up with some new thing that would mentally go faster, or be able to take off and yet drive down the road." Baker began playing bassoon in fourth grade, and by the end of high school was good enough to enter the Eastman School of Music, in Rochester, with the intention of becoming a composer. But then something happened.

One Sunday, his mother, to whom Baker was quite close, read an essay on golf by John Updike in *The New York Times Book Review,* and (Baker writes in *U and I*)

laugh[ed] harder than I had ever seen her laugh before.... Unlike her laughter at my slow-motion imitations of drivers undergoing head-on collisions, or at my father's mimed weight-lifting routines, or at my sister's sudden pretend facial tics while doing a barre, my mother's delight that Sunday had no charity or encouragement in it: it was miraculous, sourced in the nowhere of print, unaided by ham mannerisms; it caused her to spill her tea.... Nothing is more impressive than the sight of a complex person suddenly ripping out a laugh over some words in a serious book or periodical. I took note of *The New York Times Book Review* after that day, and I began increasingly to want to be a part of the prosperous-seeming world of books (prosperous in contrast, that is, to the grant-dependent and sparsely attended concerts for living composers, whose ranks I had up until then wanted to join), where there was money for screaming full-page ads and where success was quantified as it was on the Billboard charts, and where consequently there didn't seem to be quite the enormous gulf between popular and elite efforts as there was in music. Indeed, Updike himself regularly appeared *on* the best-seller list! Could anyone claim that Elliott Carter or Morton Subotnick or Walter Piston or John Cage or even Gian Carlo Menotti was a complete tweeter-woofer-crossover success in the way that Updike was?

After graduating from Haverford College (he met his wife-to-be, Margaret Brentano, down the street at Bryn Mawr), Baker worked for a year on Wall Street, writing research reports for a now defunct securities firm. It was the beginning of the eighties. "I got very fired up," he says, "about kind of mystical notions about markets and trading and everything. It was so unlike anything I'd grown up with. They put me on the oil industry, when *(Continued on page 125)*

Just Call Him Steve

(Continued from page 116) the navy. Actually, he was seventeen and eligible for the navy, so instead of waiting to be drafted, he chose his own service.

After six months of basic training in New York and Virginia, Ross boarded the U.S.S. *Hopping*, a destroyer escort converted into an auxiliary-personnel destroyer. "We were shallow-draft," Ross says, "so that we could get close to islands." His recollection of his wartime service is that "we carried supplies and Marines into landings in the Pacific, then the war ended. Because of having overseas duty most of my time, which was very unusual," Ross explains, "we had all these points, so I got out early." ("Points" were awarded to servicemen and women, with bonus awards for combat and overseas duty, to determine in what order they were to be discharged.)

Ross, who wears almost invisible hearing aids, attributes the need to his navy service. "I have a hearing problem," he says. "I love to have a dinner for six or eight people. That's fine. I have trouble hearing more. At cocktail parties if you're a tall person with a hearing problem you get all the background noise of a cocktail party without hearing anything. I'm about six foot three and a half. You stand there with a smile on your face hoping you're shaking your head at the right time." He says his impairment became noticeable "ten years after the war, when I was twenty-eight or twenty-nine. It was caused by the firing of guns off the ship. They didn't have the type of equipment they have now to protect you."

Ross's official service record tells an entirely different story. In fact, two weeks after Ross began active duty in the navy, and more than six months before he joined his ship, the war in the Pacific had already ended. Seaman First Class Steven Jay Ross, 7172226, spent five months of his one year and eleven days in the navy lollygagging aboard the U.S.S. *Hopping*. Nearly two months before Ross joined her crew, navy records say, she was in the Charleston, South Carolina, shipyard, where "ammunition was unloaded," and the ship began a "pre-inactive overhaul." She went from dry dock to an anchorage in Norfolk, Virginia, where Ross boarded. She was under way at sea with Ross aboard for only two days, heading from Norfolk to Charleston for more shipyard work, then at sea five more days to Green Cove Springs, Florida, where she was decommissioned.

The *Hopping* had indeed seen heavy action in both the Atlantic and Pacific. But a hyperactive Warner press agent embellished the myth even further, confusing, as Ross does, the ship with the man, when he wrote that, "during World War II, Mr. Ross saw action with the U.S. Navy in the Atlantic and Pacific theaters."

After the war, veterans were given tuition-free access to schools and colleges under the G.I. Bill of Rights. They could attend any accredited school that would admit them. But, for those like Ross who hadn't yet started college, it was hard to break through the crowd going back. A number of new schools sprang up to capitalize on the oversupply of applicants.

The headmaster at Columbia Grammar, whose advice Ross says he sought, thought he would be best served by the advantages and personal attention of a small college. Ross remembers the headmaster recommended that, "as opposed to a triple bunk bed in a gymnasium at a Duke or Wisconsin. He didn't think my education would be very good going to a class with 120 or 130 others." The academic intimacy and privacy of a small school appealed to Ross. "He told me it didn't matter, Yale, Harvard, or anything else. We were living in an unusual time and it was best to find the best professors with a small amount of people. After the war you sort of deserve a room by yourself or with only one other person."

Paul Smith's two-year junior college, on the site of an old resort hotel in the isolated north woods near Lake Placid, New York, was just such a place. No matter that it specialized in "resorts management," "hospitality," and "forestry," with a background program in liberal arts. Or that it gave only an A.A. (associate of arts) degree, upped in old Warner handouts to a B.A. (the more conventional four-year bachelor of arts).

Ross entered its first class, in 1946, surrounded by other ex-G.I.'s. When they weren't studying, they went snowshoeing, skiing, hunting, trapping, fishing, or partying on weekends in Saranac Lake. "It was fantastic," Ross says. "You could go fishing or hunting with your professors." Ross is Paul Smith's most famous graduate, remembered fondly by classmates and professors for three attributes: (1) "He was brilliant in my field of high-powered mathematics, particularly calculus," one professor recalls; (2) "Ross was one handsome dude," a classmate says, "good-looking, articulate, quiet—he stood out, young ladies paid a lot of attention to him"; (3) "Touch football was very popular and he was an addict," says another.

In the fall of 1947 the college paper reported:

> Taking full advantage of Deerwood's weak line... the Campus Commandos scuttled the Deerwood Devils to the tune of 14 to 6... Saturday, November 1st.... [In the third quarter] Steve Ross, who had been playing a wonderful game at right end, was injured while attempting to knock down a pass.... During the bitterly contested battle on the gridiron ...Steve, after many brilliant receptions while playing end for the Commandos, was once more in the center of a scramble for the pigskin. When the mass of players untangled themselves he was alone on the turf with the first major injury incurred on the field of competition for Paul Smith's College.... Steve was admitted to the Saranac General Hospital.

The school paper reported: "Steve's left arm was badly broken below the elbow, and a steel plate was used to strengthen the joint which was torn. ... After a physician's consultation, it was decided that the injury was serious and the patient would have to remain there for at least three weeks."

Ross has a different recollection of his broken arm and football career, which reached its apogee playing not touch football in college but end for the professional Cleveland Browns. At one time in his life, the children's bedrooms were festooned with Cleveland Browns banners and souvenirs, supposedly a reminder of those dreamy days. He also explained to his friends and family that the metal plate in his arm came from a bone-breaking collision in a Browns play called "the cross," more often known as "the Statue of Liberty," in which a passer raises the ball, which is snatched from his cocked arm by one of his teammates. The Cleveland Browns, the local newspapers, and his putative teammates have no recollection or record of him or anyone with a name close to his ever playing with the team.

Over the years, Ross has scaled down his tale of playing defensive end for the Cleveland Browns. "I tried out and was accepted" in 1948, he now says, but "I broke my arm in training camp with the Cleveland Browns—I have a plate in my arm." His career with the Browns was short-lived, he now claims. "Because of the arm it went fast. I got in and out of the camp fast." Where was the camp? "Cleveland—somewhere."

Dozens of people who have been close to Ross sympathize with, more than criticize, his mythmaking. "Steve invented all

Just Call Him Steve

that stuff," says one of them. "Steve's accomplishments are really extraordinary. He does not have to invent false history. I think it speaks to his lack of feeling good about himself. I don't say he's unique in this regard, not at all. Nor do I hold it against him. It makes me feel sad for him."

In those days, even after World War II, American business was largely segregated. Blacks, who had been totally segregated in the armed services (in sports as well), were still virtually inadmissible in the white-collar working world. First- or second-generation Jews were incomparably better off but still mostly shunned in businesses run by Wasps and more assimilated Jews. Irish and Italians were in similar confinement. Steve Ross and his striving friends, raised in the Bronx or Brooklyn, and from the "wrong" or no colleges, had to make their own way in a harsher, hustling world.

"*Machers,*" they were called, a half-derisive word for "doers" in the Yiddish idiom Ross never uses. "They were self-made New York Jewish businessmen," one of their more privileged colleagues says. "A few were either working in secondary positions in good investment banks or senior positions in bad ones—they were deal-oriented." They heard the usually unspoken but clear message that they should "stay with their own" and not invade established businesses. So whatever his prowess on the playing fields and his charming presence, Ross found himself in New York's garment district. He started as a stockroom boy and was later a salesman of sports slacks, then a children's-bathing-suit salesman in a company owned by an uncle.

In 1954, when he was twenty-six, he married Carol Rosenthal, the handsome daughter of the owner of the Riverside, an expanding West Side funeral-parlor empire. The Rosenthal family offered their new son-in-law a job in the business. Ross at first said no. "I said I can be cut twenty-two places and it's fine with me," recalls Ross. "But I can't stand to see anyone else cut. I could pass out." They understood and told him, "No, not downstairs, upstairs in administration." From upstairs, away from the embalmers, Ross built the Riverside into the mini-conglomerate Kinney Corporation.

At home, things weren't going so well. "When I was in the funeral business," Ross says, "I sometimes worked a night shift. That's not very conducive to a good marriage." While Ross was expanding Kinney into the movie business, he was spending much of his time in California or working on deals in New York. Even fewer hours were left for his wife, son, and daughter. In 1974 they separated and in 1978 divorced.

Of the marriage, a chastened Ross says today, "I have a thirty-four-year-old and a twenty-nine-year-old and now an eight-year-old. I always said I'd give them more time. So I just hope that we're all right in saying quality is more important than quantity when you have been given a second chance."

By then Ross was a risen star in the corporate movie world. He met Courtney Sale, the daughter of a Texas Coca-Cola-bottling family. An attractive Skidmore graduate, she had run her own small art gallery in Dallas before transplanting herself to New York. She began working as an art dealer for several galleries and was an aspiring documentary-film maker. A Warner friend had introduced her to Ross. For two years they were inseparable, until one night at that favorite watering hole "21" he met Amanda Burden.

In Orson Welles's landmark film, *Citizen Kane,* the key to unlocking the mysteries of Charles Foster Kane's life is a child's sled hauntingly referred to at the beginning and end of the movie as "Rosebud." "If there's a Rosebud in Steve's life," says someone who knows Ross well, "it will take you back to Amanda."

At thirty-one, Amanda Mortimer Burden was finishing a postponed college education at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, a suburb of New York City. Amanda was as beautiful an undergraduate as ever graced a college campus, with social credentials to match. She was the daughter of the socially registered Stanley Mortimer and the impeccable style setter Barbara "Babe" Paley, second wife of CBS chairman William S. Paley and one of New York and Boston's "fabulous Cushing sisters." Each of the sisters had married "well": Babe to Wall Street and Standard Oil heir Stanley Mortimer, then to Paley; her sister Minnie to Vincent Astor, later to the painter James Fosburgh; and Betsey, first to James Roosevelt, F.D.R.'s eldest son, and then to John Hay "Jock" Whitney.

Amanda, who had divorced Carter Burden, another New Yorker prominent in the Social Register, was introduced to Steve Ross by her friend William vanden Heuvel. Ken Rosen suggested it.

Courtney Sale was no match for the alluring, flirtatious Amanda. Ross instantly set Courtney aside. Within months, he had moved into Amanda's apartment at 10 Gracie Square, overlooking the East River. Ross became her round-the-clock companion, and embraced her two young children, showering them with treats.

When Ross flew to China with a group of Warner cronies and their wives, Amanda went along. She and the children accompanied Ross on a trip to Disneyland. When he took friends on the Warner plane to Las Vegas, she and other friends watched him, glistening with sweat under his three-piece suit, chips overflowing every pocket, happily distributing some of his card-table winnings to his guests.

Second only to his movie studio, Ross's biggest enthusiasm was the Warner-owned Cosmos soccer team. He was such a rooter at every game that, as a joke, aides gave him a parachute-type harness, supposedly to keep him from falling out of his box as he cheered the Cosmos on. Amanda went with him to every game, knew all the players, and enjoyed becoming a soccer groupie.

From the Beverly Hills Hotel pool to the charity ballrooms of New York, they became the talk of both coasts. Her mother, Babe, who had no fondness for Jews in the abstract, liked Ross less in person. Bill Paley, who had grown up in a Chicago ghetto, was rich and a young-man-about-town by the time he and his family settled in Philadelphia. He became prouder of his broadcast eminence, his friendship with Jock Whitney, his finely hewn taste in art, and the cultural artifacts of aristocracy than of his Jewish roots. At a small CBS meeting, Paley once asked an incredulous executive who used the word "kvetch" what it meant. Ross was not Paley's kind of Jew—"Tacky," he said. "Paley was imperious and thought of himself as a king," says one former Warner executive, "which just heightened Steve's sense of unworthiness."

Amanda had been a neglected child, tended by nannies, never close to her mother. Amanda's conspicuous public displays of affection for Ross seemed to her friends to be her way of striking, in one blow, at both her mother's and stepfather's snobbery. "She was sticking it to them," speculates one intimate.

She arranged Ross's lavish fiftieth-birthday party. It was described by one awed Warner executive: "Three hundred of Steve's closest friends were there at the Waldorf. It was one of the greatest parties of all times. Governor Hugh Carey and Sinatra. Joe Raposo composed a special

song. Clint Eastwood sent a telegram. It was written up in the social pages. I was so privileged to be there. It was mostly corporate people—a pecking-order party, all corporate and divisional. Those kinds of things made you feel like family."

Ross's family was always at Warner, never at the Paleys', where he was treated with condescension. Sally Bedell Smith reports in her biography of Paley that in 1978, when Babe Paley died of cancer,

> Bill Paley picked up the phone to call Steve Ross, then chairman of Warner Communications, who was dating Amanda at the time and would marry her a year later. In the early days of his career, Ross had been an undertaker. "Call me when it is over and I'll be there," he had said to Amanda. Arriving within minutes, Ross said, "If you go out of the bedroom, I will take care of it all." So the family filed out, leaving a silver-haired movie mogul to tend to arrangements for Babe Paley's lifeless body.

Ross, several of his associates say, "still gives great funerals." But marriage ceremonies were a different matter. He wanted his ex-wife, Carol, to marry again (she did in June 1979) before he himself did, so as not to disaffect the Rosenthal family, another friend explains. Ross was a reluctant groom, more comfortable with the people who worked for him than in the salons of Amanda's or the Paleys' friends. Their potential marriage created a fiery on-and-off tension between them. On her deathbed, Babe Paley was told by a friend that the marriage seemed to be off. Babe beamed, the friend says, rose weakly from her bed, and "danced a little jig," chanting happily, "They're not getting married, they're not getting married."

But in November of 1979, after four years of vacillation, they were married privately. Later, Paley gave the wedding party in his opulent apartment. The guests were mostly Amanda's and Paley's friends, with a small sprinkling of Warner executives. When one of Ross's officemates rose to deliver a tasteless toast suggesting that, since they had been living together so long, what was so exciting about this wedding, Paley harrumphed to a guest close at hand, "Brooklyn meets Park Avenue."

If the long courtship had often been romantic, the marriage was tense. Although Ross was one of the most generously rewarded executives in the country, within the family he complained incessantly to both his wives about being short of money, never failing to display his high living elsewhere. Apart from his business, Ross seemed to have few interests. Backgammon, at which he was a whiz, was his favorite diversion.

Although the glamorous couple showed up in the gossip columns mostly at charity dinners and political fund-raisers, they spent more time with Ross's Warner pals, cultivating his show-biz and growing political connections, than they did on Amanda's turf. There were no quiet moments of reading, since Ross doesn't read; four longtime Ross associates say separately that Ross has *never* been known to have read a single book in the years they have known him.

On the evenings Amanda and he were home alone, Ross, often clad in a bathrobe, watched movies, played with Amanda's children, or sat in a corner scribbling notes for deals on small pads. When they went out evenings, if he hadn't had his hair coiffed in the office, a stylist took care of him at home. Everyone who knows him says he has always been meticulous about his appearance.

No one had yet coined the term "trophy wife," but Amanda was the comeliest trophy of that species. Though she was simply if tastefully adorned—"the Halston look"—before she met Ross, he did spend to redecorate her. Ross bought her wardrobes of clothes from Giorgio's of Beverly Hills on Rodeo Drive. He also gave her a few baubles (two pairs of earrings, a ring and bracelet), and liked to see her "dressed up" when they went out.

Even her fine piquant features were emboldened by enhancing new makeup, right down to her newly reddened fingernails. Whatever their troubles at home, in public Steve carried her on his arm with the proud look of the possessor of the finest pick in the aviary. "He became different when he married Amanda," says a close friend. "He was a Brooklyn boy and he was basking in her glow." Another friend who knew them both says, "It was the start of Steve's public persona when he met Amanda. And when they married, he thought he was getting Babe Paley. She hoped she might be getting another Bill Paley. They were both wrong. Steve changed dramatically after the marriage. He loved the social aspect of it. He was all caught up in it."

Nonsense, says Ross, "that's wrong." It was Warner's growth and his new relationship with Paley that were the main differences in his life. "Other than my lunches or dinners with Bill," things were the same, he says. "Bill and I used to have these discussions about cable versus networks. He had CBS Records. We had Warner Records. We were both in publishing. He was a customer of ours. We sold them some TV shows and movies. So we had interesting business and personal discussions. We got along very well. My life didn't change at all."

In the eighth month of his marriage to Amanda, Ross was suddenly rushed from his office to nearby Lenox Hill Hospital, struck down by a heart attack. After treatment and a summer of recovery, Steve took Amanda off on a convalescent cruise to the Caribbean aboard the *Q.E. 2*, among tourists and holiday revelers. Amanda hated it; Ross surrounded himself with the strangers aboard and charmed them.

When they returned, Ross, who'd conquered his addiction of five packs of Parliaments a day ("I was never without a cigarette," he says), had more than his health on his mind. He had put his sadness over Ken Rosen behind him and handsomely remarried. But the month after their return from the Caribbean, one week after they moved into a gargantuan Park Avenue triplex previously owned by Seagram heir Edgar Bronfman, Ross got another stunning blow. After barely sixteen months of married life, Amanda had had enough. She walked out.

Ross was angered, hurt, but powerless. He flew off to Warner's Acapulco haven with his lady-in-waiting, Courtney Sale. In the spring of that year, Ross demanded an immediate divorce. Granted.

After their divorce, Amanda Mortimer Burden Ross had her pick of surnames. She chose to be known thereafter as Amanda Burden.

A year later, in October of 1982, close to three hundred guests gathered in the ballroom of the Plaza hotel, including Governor Hugh Carey, Steven Spielberg, Cary Grant, Barbara Walters, and Quincy Jones. They heard another wedding toast, this time to Courtney and Steve from Warner Bros.' Ted Ashley: "To Steve Ross, who, for all his success, has continued to find true happiness elusive—until now."

Not quite. It was only intermission time in the seesaw melodrama that was Steve Ross's life.

"When you're all done," says one veteran Warner executive who was forced out, "you can't make mincemeat out of the guy, because he has amazing talent—and huge fatal flaws."

In the years ahead, Ross's flaws haunted him, but his talent overcame, producing the biggest deal of his life. Did he

consider the merger with Time Inc. the capstone of his career? "I hope not," Ross says. "I don't see it as an end." In language reminiscent of George Leigh Mallory's answer to the question of why he wanted to climb Mount Everest ("Because it is there") or Willie Sutton's explanation of why he robbed banks ("That's where the money is"), Ross describes his inhalation of Time:

"I just feel it was something that had to be done, a natural. When you look at it as a businessman, it was there and we did it. Other people describe it differently, but I guess one would have to say that this is the biggest in my life because it was a $14 billion deal. In 1962, when we put Kinney together, then in 1969, when we acquired Warner–Seven Arts, that was unique, all different turns of events. So you reflect back and you say, Well, you started a company in 1962 that was acquired in 1989 for $14 billion. It's something that one will always remember." □

Hot Vox

(Continued from page 121) I wanted to be in high-tech stocks. So I was writing up things in the coal industry, which was mildly interesting. Actually, the nice stuff was the scrubbing equipment that they were getting to make the effluent cleaner. And I liked the coal-mining machinery and stuff."

Then his business mysticism evaporated. He moved to Berkeley, where he lived with Margaret and her parents, took a writing workshop with Donald Barthelme, and began to produce precociously articulate, Barthelme-esque short stories about classical musicians and conceptual artists. The first two stories he sold were bought on the same day, in 1981, by *The New Yorker* and *The Atlantic*.

Then came a long fallow period: Baker couldn't find the voice he wanted to speak in. He moved to Boston, where he worked as a word processor, a technical writer, a temp. He and Brentano married in 1985. He wrote when the mood seized him, dictated ideas into a mini-recorder as he drove his '82 Colt to work. Nothing jelled. Then, in 1986, he came up with a strange, densely described little story, based on both his Wall Street experience and temping, "about a guy getting dressed in the morning. Putting on his shirt and everything. Getting on the subway and stuff. With that story, I felt I'd found a tone that I liked."

But "once Margaret got pregnant, it seemed wrong, somehow, to be a temp. I mean, I thought of my child being, say, five years old and saying, 'Daddy, what do you do?' [*Important, fatherly voice*] 'Well, I'm a *temp*.' " He laughs. "It didn't have the right ring to it, you know.

"So I pulled myself together and got myself a job as a technical writer. And got *very* involved in it. Writing user's manuals for these large data-communications networks—I got very involved in *making it a better product*. I liked it so much that I was just consumed by it, really. And Margaret and I both decided—I'd turned thirty by that time, and I was supposed to be a writer, and I was writing network-management software manuals. Piling up nouns in long piles, the way you do when you write that kind of stuff. And so I just quit. We had enough money for us to last for six months. So I wrote *The Mezzanine*. I incorporated the story that I'd already written, and started in that style.

"I felt I was going to put *everything* into it," he says. "Every little neat thing I had stored up, and wanted to write about, I was gonna put in one place. And if it meant long footnotes, I was gonna have long footnotes. It was a tremendous amount of fun to write. I remember bursting out of the study, saying, 'I'm gonna put *everything* in this!' Just this triumphant feeling of, you know, it didn't matter whether it was gonna be formally imperfect or something. Just *throw it all in*."

The Mezzanine's plot, in its entirety, revolves around an office worker's lunchtime excursion to replace a pair of broken shoelaces. This, of course, is a wild reduction. The book reads, somehow, as though Laurence Sterne (or, more precisely, *Tristram Shandy*'s Uncle Toby) had taken a job in a mirror-glass office building and lived to tell the tale. The narrative weaves itself around every detail in the hero's environment, and proceeds, at a grand, leisurely, ceaselessly digressive pace, until the shoelaces are procured. Baker himself puts it best, in *U and I:* "I wanted my first novel to be a veritable infarct of narrative cloggers; the trick being to feel your way through each clog by blowing it up until its obstructiveness finally revealed not blank mass but unlooked-for seepage points of passage."

The book made Nicholson Baker's name, on both sides of the Atlantic. Nobody had seen anything like it before. "If you're like me," Tom Stoppard says, "and you read perhaps three weeklies and four dailies and five Sunday papers, you get a good sense of what kind of splash a book makes. And there was no question with *The Mezzanine* that it really perked the interest of jaded reviewers. Because they were reading something which wasn't like ninety-nine out of a hundred books that they were given. The rest of the week's books would have something in common, no matter how disparate they might be. And Baker's didn't fit with any of that. I think if you like literature, you respond sympathetically to that. It was the kind of book you tell your friends about."

There was also this: the case has been pluperfectly made for the decline of American culture, the facelessness and homogeneity of the modern urban scene. Baker took the office-building milieu and reveled in it like an intellectual porpoise. Where ninety-nine out of a hundred writers might slickly bewail the *ens* of an escalator, Baker turned it into an occasion for rejoicing, an ecstatic mandala:

> The absence of passengers, combined with the slight thumping sound the escalators made, quickened my appreciation of this metallic, uplifting machine. Grooved surfaces slid out from underneath the lobby floor and with an almost botanical gradualness segmented themselves into separate steps. . . .

"I mean, what you really want to be is *strange*," he says. "Because that feeling of strangeness is delightful. There's a hundred ways that I could make you feel uncomfortable. But there's only one or two or three ways that I could make you feel at *ease*. The whole premise of conceptual art—that you've got to make the viewer kind of worried—doesn't seem very convincing to me. I want the reader to be happy. At some basic level, I want to be writing entertainment."

But tweeter-woofer-crossover success had to wait. "I lay awake two nights planning the acceptance speech I would make when my novel won the National Book Award," Baker writes in *U and I*. Instead, "my publisher [then Weidenfeld & Nicolson] didn't even bother to send in my book for consideration. I won no awards of any kind—not the N.B.A., the PEN/Faulkner, the PEN/Hemingway, the Whiting Foundation, the Joe Savago New Voice Award, the National Book Critics Circle, or a Big Mac. Not a single dinky award! Fuck them all!"

It is perfectly understandable for a bril-

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liant book not to sell, and *The Mezzanine*'s sales were mediocre. It is another thing for a great new talent not to be rewarded. Baker's reviews praised him to the skies, but the work was strange enough—and the writer himself far enough outside the rolling logjam of the lit industry—to leave the prize people oddly underwhelmed. The best American writer of his generation remains a relative secret.

This is about to change. *Vox* is Baker's most demotic book; it is the first of his works to proceed by interaction rather than contemplation, and its dialogue form makes it move at a gallop. The narrative has, most definitely, unclogged. And then there is the subject matter. When you tell Nicholson Baker what seems obvious—that he's going to get a *lot* of attention for a book which: (1) will make him enemies among those who would prefer that sex be written about differently, or not written about at all, and (2) could go a long way, among those not alienated, toward establishing him as the best writer, height for age, in America—he looks as uncomfortable as, perhaps, only he can look.

"I'm a little terrified of this," he says. "I'm a writer because I can't do the stage appearances; I'm not a spoken person at all, really. So I wish I didn't have to do interviews. I mean, I'm kinda curious what the questions are gonna be. But I really don't want to answer them. Ideally you would write a book like this—which is a private book, about two people doing something in private—and it would just exist as a book.

"I'm not going to read from it. There's a reading tour scheduled, but I'm going to just write something. I don't know what. About what it was like to write the book, or something.

"I think everybody's interested in sex, but you want to satisfy your interest in different ways. And listening to *me*, professorial-looking me, standing up, reading aloud some section about—clit cloisters!" He shakes his head and laughs. "Oh, it's gonna be a blast, though.

"I got such a kick out of—there was a terrible review in *Kirkus* of *U and I*. It said in the middle that 'surely somebody would be glad to learn that Baker "never successfully masturbated to Updike's writing" (although Iris Murdoch's words sent him over the edge).'

"And I read that, and it's just the *glee* of having put this embarrassing fact of myself into a book, and then having a reviewer have to quote it—I mean, it was just so tremendous! There's a lot of that pleasure in this. Any kind of embarrassing little tidbit is so much *fun* to put down! And to *know* that it's an embarrassment that other people have. Or a *secret thought* that other people have. I mean, I have this *faith*, somehow, that I am *normal*. And that other people will see."

Normal? Well—yes and no. Baker, in his slightly awkward physical manifestation, with his "gonna"s and "kinda"s and embarrassed giggles, is supremely normal. And in his work he is often his own Leopold Bloom: we have learned, in various places, of the normality of his toilet habits, nose picking, fathering style, and penis size. And literary envy. "Updike," he writes in *U and I*, "was the first to take the penile sensorium under the wing of elaborate metaphorical prose. Once the sensation of the interior of a vagina has been compared to a ballet slipper. . . the sexual revolution is complete."

With *U and I*, Baker successfully disburdened himself of John Updike. (But has Updike disburdened himself of Nicholson Baker? "Reading about myself," the older author says, "is generally disconcerting, since it all seems so 'off,' without anything I can put my finger on. But when I did settle to *U and I*, I realized it wasn't about me and my work at all, or hardly at all—it was about the way we construct writers in our minds, to serve our own purposes. Having thus concluded, I found the book both lively and jolly.") In *Vox*, Baker takes on the Master, on the Master's own ground:

"You haven't told me what *you're* wearing," she said.

"I am wearing. . .I'm wearing, well, a bathrobe, and flip-flops with blue soles and red holder-onners. I'm new to flip-flops. . . . On weekends I put them on and I walk down to the corner and buy the paper, and the feeling of that thong right in the crotch of your toe—man, it pulls you together, it starts your day. It's like putting your feet in a bridle."

"Are you 'into' feet?" she asked.

"No no no no no no no no. On women? No. They're neutral. They're about like elbows. In my *own* case, I do. . ."

"What?"

"Well, I do very often, when I'm about to come, I seem to like to rise up on the balls of my feet. It's something about the tension of all the leg muscles and the, you know, the ass muscles, it puts all the nerves in communication, it's as if I'm coming with my legs. On the other hand, when I do it I sometimes feel like some kind of high school teacher, bouncing on his heels, or like some kind of demagogue, rising up on tiptoe and roaring out something about destiny."

"And then, at the very top of your *relevé*, you come into a tissue," she said.

"Yep."

"The things we do for love."

The penile sensorium has been extended.

Nicholson Baker and I have spent much of the afternoon driving around, looking for interesting venues, besides his house, in which this interview might take place. There aren't many. Not much happens in this part of the world. That's sort of the point. (Before taking their daughter out, Baker's wife, trying to be helpful, left him a note that read, "N.B.: If you get a chance, by chance, the bedroom bulb still needs changing. A two-man job, and a *dramatic moment!*")

"I am to a bad extent indifferent about where I live," Baker says, hunching over the wheel of the brown '82 Colt. "I could be happier, probably, if I gave more thought to where I wanted to be. It's like with this car—I *don't* really want to be driving this car. And yet it just seems like a shame to be throwing it away. And you can have the same thoughts about this gearshift, or the wear on this key, that you could have if you were driving a more decent car. And it's a lot cheaper."

We have checked out the Tired Iron Tractor Museum and the National Warplane Museum. Now Baker is driving me back to the airport. His car is a kind of moving museum, itself, of archaeological strata from various periods of his life. As the flat upstate countryside moves by, Baker worries aloud about inferences people may draw from *Vox*. He emphasizes, lest I get the wrong idea, that the novel was written while his wife was overseas.

"Did you ever call a phone-sex line?" I ask.

"I called after I'd finished the book, to make sure that what I'd written was technically possible," he says. "That the two characters could have met on a party line, then switched to a private line."

"But this was strictly for research purposes?"

A long pause. "Yes."

"Did you and your wife. . ." I hesitate.

"Did my wife and I have phone sex?" Baker says. "We went out for a long time before we were married. We certainly did talk on the phone a lot.

"I think the relationship between the two characters can be here and there correlated with the relationship between my wife and me. Jim is an exaggerated version of a selective part of me. A fragment of me that I then sort of artificially grew in some nutrient medium.

"Has your wife read *Vox*?" I ask.

"She was the first reader," Baker says. "She liked it. She thought that it was *not*

pornography—that it was quite tender. She thought that it *was* hot in places. She said when she woke up the next morning after reading it, she had this vague memory that she'd done something dirty, but she didn't really remember what it was."

We ride in silence for a while. "I write well about things that turn me on," he says. "The problem with writing sex scenes is that you get about three sentences into it and it's *just so hot*. I don't think that you could do a mathematical study of the prose rhythms and find out exactly where I jerked off and didn't. But the writing probably does change when the two characters are getting aroused, or deflecting arousal. I had to fight my own wish sometimes to. . ." he trails off.

"Does that make sense? To admit in public that you masturbate while writing? I mean, everybody does. Strum. I'm sorry. I don't see how you could imagine any writer writing a sex scene and not wanting to masturbate right on the spot. You're going over the images so slowly—the typing speed is so slow—that every shape, or every thought—even if the thought is pedestrian—you know, it goes so slowly through your mind that it's incredibly arousing."

There's a long pause; the Colt thrums. "Ah, it's a good life," Baker sighs.

"That romantic clinch at the end—the only clinch is the fact that they both come," I say. "How romantic is that?"

"Well," Baker says, looking hopeful, "*I* want them to get together. There *was* an exchange of phone numbers—the *door* is open. Once they get over the oddity of what they've just done, theoretically they could, maybe, re-establish contact. And get themselves on a more normal footing. I would like them to go out—you know, maybe get *off* the phone and get together in some other way." He smiles, owlishly. "That would be nice." □

Bob Kerrey

(Continued from page 103) he's gotta wrap it back up again, and go."

As a gung ho SEAL en route to Vietnam, Bob Kerrey went to his polling place and enthusiastically voted for Richard Nixon for president. Two and a half years later, on May 14, 1970, he went to the White House for a Rose Garden ceremony, at which Nixon presented him with the Medal of Honor for his courage at Hon Tre. Kerrey hadn't wanted to accept the medal, but his fellow SEALs urged him to. He observed that the president had bad breath.

Kerrey returned to Lincoln bitter, lost, and angry. Most of all, he was changed. "I saw him as really wounded, not just physically, but really wounded emotionally," recollects Jessie Rasmussen, Kerrey's sister. "I remember two or three of the guys who were in the hospital with him in Philadelphia came back with him at one point and visited, and all their eyes had that deep, almost haunted look. They'd seen things that the rest of us had not seen. They were laughing and having a good time, but there was a sadness in their eyes. I just remember that."

For a time, Kerrey hated everyone: he hated the politicians who'd ruined his life, and he hated the strident, enemy-exalting, anti-war people chanting Ho's name in the streets. He went out to Berkeley for a while, and drifted into Allard Lowenstein's sphere, registering newly enfranchised eighteen- to twenty-year-olds to vote, before returning to Nebraska and getting a job as a pharmacist.

But his enthusiasm for the druggist's trade belonged to another lifetime, and Kerrey and his brother-in-law Dean Rasmussen determined to go to work for themselves. They thought of combining their trades—Dean managed restaurants—and opening a combination pharmacy-diner. Reason prevailed, and in 1973, they opened Grandmother's Skillet, an Omaha eatery featuring home-style meals and the labor of the proprietors at every level, from kitchen to bar.

It was a struggle—no capital, little experience—but the new partners were determined, putting in eighteen-hour days, seven days a week, and it turned out that Kerrey was pretty good at his new calling. He developed innovative ways of tracking inventory, and when business got slow in the bar, he devised such gimmicks as hiring a bagpiper for "Scotch Night" and dressing up as a matador on "Spanish Night." A tornado blew Grandmother's away in 1975, but they rebuilt, and thrived, adding new restaurants until they'd built a chain.

The restaurants hit big, in part because Kerrey had this way about him, a charm that was particularly useful in the restaurant business. "It's obvious in terms of politics today, but people like to be around him," says Rasmussen. "People like to work for him, people like to work with him. He was good in helping us attract not only good employees and good managers, but also people liked to come into the restaurant and see him, long before he had any interest in politics."

Kerrey and Rasmussen eventually built nine restaurants, employing more than seven hundred people, and they parlayed that success into a lucrative chain of high-end health clubs, the Prairie Life Centers. Quietly, and in the muted fashion of the Midwest, which scorns ostentation, the partners got rich. Kerrey is worth more than $1.8 million, and earns at least $225,000 a year from the business.

In April 1974, Kerrey married Beverly Defnall, a Lincoln girl from his youngest sister's class at his old high school. Seven months later, they had their first child, Ben, and almost from the beginning the marriage was strained. Bev, only twenty-two at the time, was home alone with a kid in Omaha, and she had a husband who wouldn't relent on his schedule. Though they had another child, daughter Lindsey, two years later, things didn't mend. They separated, and Bev urged reconciliation at first, but in 1978, declaring the marriage "irretrievably broken," Bob filed for divorce.

Now, with Kerrey out on the campaign trail, his bachelorhood is a fertile source of inquiry, partly because of the Debra Winger factor, partly because unmarried presidential candidates are an oddity. Kids, especially, query the candidate on his marital status. (One South Dakota third-grader asked him, "If my mom divorced my dad, would you marry my mom?" Kerrey deadpanned, "It would be legal.") He allows that "it would probably be better to present a couple to the American people," but people close to him suggest he is a man best suited to bachelorhood.

His sister Jessie imagines that Kerrey would be difficult to live with. "Bob will say that about himself," Jessie says. "A lot of it comes from my father's style—we're very internal people. . . . And sometimes when you're real internally driven, you don't establish real close relationships with people. You don't spill out all those inner feelings with other people. And I think most women like that in their husbands."

Bev agrees that her ex-husband was rather uncommunicative, but notices a change in the years since their split. "I think he'd been through some experiences, like the war, that you don't just sit down and chat about," she says. "But he seems to be getting better and better at that. You know, he writes postcards to his kids, and poems, and things like that. So I think

he's done real well, and assimilated what's happened to him in his life. And I think he learned to write it and speak it. I mean, when he speaks in front of people, I think those are inner feelings that he's sharing."

When Kerrey asked his ex-wife to sit with their children on the stage when he announced his candidacy in Lincoln, she agreed, even though she'd never participated in his campaigns before. She says that Kerrey has always been a devoted father, making time in his schedule for his kids even during the campaign. "It's difficult," she says, "but he's always been there, supporting all of us. I'm not like some other women that are raising their children by themselves, because he's always been involved. . . . I mean, I know the loneliness, I'm sure he does, too, when you're alone like that. But it's always difficult."

There is about Kerrey a separateness, an insularity, which living alone seems to fit. For the time he spends in Washington, he has an apartment on Pennsylvania Avenue, but in the Memorial Park section of Omaha he owns a two-story house in a middle-class neighborhood filled with kids and bikes and skateboards. And there, he seems oddly out of place: a bachelor in a context of family, his Medal of Honor tucked in a closet by the bedroom, where he sleeps alone.

Jessie, a mother of two, says, "I know that a part of him envies what I have." But she adds, "I think Bob will be very, very careful about entering into a marital relationship again. He doesn't want to cause that kind of pain, either for himself or for his children, or for the woman. I mean, that was not easy, that was a very painful time for all of them, and he would not enter that lightly."

Gary Parrott says that, even after returning to civilian life, former commandos like Kerrey and himself remain "adrenaline junkies." Perhaps that is why Kerrey ran for governor of Nebraska in 1982.

To describe the undertaking as quixotic is to dramatically understate the case. First, Kerrey was a Democrat in a state with 55,000 more Republicans. But he might as well have been a Whig, because almost no one in the state Democratic leadership had any notion who he was (he'd registered as a Democrat for the first time only four years before). And he was taking on an incumbent, which was the main reason no known Democrats were bothering with the race (sound familiar?). Kerrey had been in the restaurant business for a decade, and running for governor, at the very least, promised some thrills. So starting with little capital, no name recognition, and a twenty-five-point deficit in the polls, he launched his campaign.

He relied mostly on family and friends, and he called in the SEALs, many of whom happily dropped what they were doing and came to Nebraska to help. It was not an orthodox campaign. "Nebraska was just a real down-home deal," recalls Parrott. "We got out there talking to the farmers, living with them, and veterans, and got drunk at the V.F.W. halls—we just had a great time. Nobody told us what to do or to watch what we said. We had the time of our lives. It was just like a SEAL operation—campaign all day and drink all night."

Astonishingly, it worked. Luring a significant number of Republican crossovers, Kerrey edged out Governor Charles Thone by 7,233 votes.

And Nebraska loved its bachelor governor, who from the start behaved in ways that the electorate, fed on Republican style, had never seen in a politician. For one thing, he appointed members of the opposition party to key positions on the bench and in his administration. Governor Kerrey would stop by a playground near the capitol and shoot hoops; he'd run in marathons with his prosthesis right there for the world to see; and his constituency-tending often took place in jazz joints and taverns. Barflies in beer joints all over the state had notches on their mugs from Kerrey sightings.

As for achievements, it was a fallow time for an activist governor; agriculture was in crisis and money was tight. Kerrey's term featured some modest achievements (including erasing the state's deficit) and a minor scandal (a business partner of his was involved in a failed S&L, but Kerrey was cleared of conflict-of-interest allegations). Mostly, Bob Kerrey's term as governor was known for Debra Winger.

The throaty, vivacious actress, never accused of monkish self-denial in Hollywood's fast lane, came to staid Nebraska to shoot *Terms of Endearment* in 1983. And stayed.

Kerrey met Winger at one of those hokey events that state film commissions arrange for visiting movie crews, and liked what he saw. "And then he rode out to the set on a bicycle," says Pat Kingsley, a publicist who worked on the movie, and is now a friend and adviser of Kerrey's. "That's what he would do, ride out to the set on a bicycle, and he had drinks with Debra, and they had dinner, and so forth."

"And so forth" turned out to be one of the hot political romances of the decade—"probably the love of his life," Bev recently said.

"They were a natural, Debra and Bob, as corny as that sounds," says Jessie. That first meeting "was one of those blind-date things, and you went, 'Ohhh, this is gonna be awful.' And I remember Bob talking to Dean the very next morning and talking about how bright and fun she was and having so much more substance than what movie stars are supposed to have. People say that about politicians too."

Kerrey eventually moved Winger into the governor's mansion with him, a risky following of the heart in a family-values state, but it was love. It turned out that Nebraskans loved Debra too. The *Omaha World-Herald* actually took a poll probing Cornhuskers on the matter, and 76 percent approved. "More people favor Debra Winger's living in the governor's mansion than approve of my living there," Kerrey cracked.

Plain, square, unvoluptuous Nebraska had its own Camelot. It was a high time for Winger and Kerrey, and did much to raise Kerrey's national profile.

"Oh! Yes, a blast, yeah," says Winger now. "I mean, with a lot of serious work going on for him and a lot of serious thoughts and feelings and everything, but, yes, we had, we had—it's never been too difficult for us to have a good time. That's always been a very strong point."

Bev had remarried and moved to Texas, but Kerrey's kids came and spent the summer with Bob and Debra, who entertained them royally—serious shopping outings, horseback riding, and the like.

But it was a demanding, fishbowl life, too, and the strains eventually forced a parting. "I always had trouble with why do I, by default, have to accept the fishbowl," Winger says. "I can accept it for him. . . . But if I had an answer, my life wouldn't be so puzzling."

The breakup was messy, painful. Winger went off and married Timothy Hutton, and Kerrey surprisingly decided against running for a second term, going out to California to teach a class on Vietnam at U.C. Santa Barbara.

"I think what happened in that breakup is him saying, 'I have a commitment elsewhere to do other things,' " Jessie says. "He wanted me to try to talk to Debra to try and help explain who he was. She didn't fully understand his commitment to that job. She expected him to be able to go off on trips and whatever, she thought it would be great fun to line 'em up, and he could not do that.

"I think it was a point when he realized

something about himself. I don't think it was as simple as saying, 'I realize how much I have to give up to be in the public eye: I have to give up this private life, and this breakup made me realize that.' That isn't really what happened. I think there were things that were going on at the same time that made him take a look at himself and say, 'Is this the direction I want to go?' Both in terms of the relationship as well as being governor."

Kerrey himself says that leaving the governor's office was "a smart thing to do. That was a commitment, a superior commitment to living and knowing, and it was an absolutely right decision to do."

As for the breakup with Winger: "I'm not sure. I don't feel as good about [that]."

Winger has not been a presence in Kerrey's presidential campaign, but after her divorce from Hutton, she and Kerrey renewed their relationship—as friends, or more, depending upon interpretation. "The relationship continues," Winger says. "It's just that the fact that there was a certain lack of conformity was, in a way, the thing that was a freedom, because nobody could ever figure it out. It didn't fit into any of those categories, and we didn't give them any clues. But it was also the difficulty, and is the difficulty in many relationships. But, yeah, it's the real thing...real and deep, and remains an important aspect of—I trust—each of our lives."

When she hears reports that she and Kerrey are supposed to be through, Winger bristles. "I don't see it that way," she says. "I haven't heard a fat lady sing. You know, maybe over my grave, but I doubt it."

Winger was with Kerrey this year when he became a victim of one of the more bizarre episodes in petty crime: his foot was stolen. He'd left his good foot—the prosthesis that he used for running—in his gym bag in his car, and when the bag was stolen, the foot was taken, too.

"I was enraged," she says. "I mean, here's an example of how different we are. I mean, I was so enraged, and I was convinced for a week—I would not let go of the fact—that somebody was going to return it. I didn't care how low their life was, how much despair they were in; when they found what they'd stolen, I just knew they were gonna leave it...on a bench, or it would be returned. Oh, I was devastated. They looked and threw it out! And it was the only one that fit right. It was really something that brought me great despair. And he sort of saw it as 'Oh, well.' The best line was we hoped a headline didn't come out saying, SENATOR KERREY LOSES HIS LEG...AGAIN."

If among politicians Bob Kerrey seems to be a work in progress, it is because American politics is so accustomed to seeing the finished product—ready answers, arrived at in cool calculation. Kerrey works from the belly, and the head follows, and it is often a sinuous path. He acts on impulse, he changes his mind, he admits error—but always at the direction of an inner compass, rather than the expectations of the political class, to which he remains steadfastly indifferent.

The Inside the Beltway instinct about such a politician is extreme caution, to say the least. *The New Republic* published a profile of Kerrey at the end of his first year in the Senate expressing annoyance over his apparent indifference to membership in the club. "He might simply walk away again if it all becomes too 'unreal,' or if he feels he is compromising his beliefs," the article said. "That speaks well of Kerrey as a human being. But it leaves you wondering about him as a politician." Leslie Gelb, sizing up the 1992 Democratic presidential field in *The New York Times*, columnized that "Bob Kerrey's message is high on personal drama, and very low on substance," a crystallization of the conventional wisdom. But "substance" in Washington is whatever has been agreed upon and conferred by the political class, the folks who brought you "The Clarence Thomas–Anita Hill Show."

Last January, Bob Kerrey's head told him that it was a bad idea to run for president. "I'm not running, and I don't want to be president," he said. In August, his gut told him to run. After seeing President Bush soft-shoe on the first day of the Soviet coup, suggesting that the U.S. might be able to work with the new Soviet "leaders," Kerrey was so riled that he called an adviser and said he would run, and, what's more, he'd announce his candidacy in half an hour. The adviser talked him into waiting a month in order to get an organization in place.

When the Senate was debating the hot-button issue of flag burning, Kerrey at first joined the president and the vast majority of his colleagues on the bandwagon denouncing a Supreme Court decision that the act was a protected form of political expression. Then he went home on the Fourth of July break and did something possibly unique: he actually read the Court's decision, decided he'd been wrong, and publicly changed his mind. His inflamed speech on the Senate floor, in which he recalled his Vietnam experience ("I do not remember giving the safety of our flag anywhere near the thought that I gave the safety of my men"), was definitive Kerrey—open, raw emotion, a point of view forged by personal experience. And it had the effect of inspiring other senators to follow their consciences, rather than the polls.

It's not exactly *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, but many consider Kerrey as being as close to an old-fashioned and effective seeker of truth as the Capitol has seen in a while.

On the presidential-campaign trail, where notes are kept and compared over the long haul, Kerrey's inner wrestling can be seen as an inconsistency reflecting intellectual uncertainty. When he was down in Jackson, Mississippi, for the Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner last year, he mused that it might be a good idea to eliminate the top-heavy Department of Education; it was a casual thought that went largely unremarked upon, until he entered the presidential race. Now he's already had to backtrack on it. "A presidential campaign," Republican strategist Ed Rollins has noted, "is a bad place to think aloud."

Sometimes, though, Kerrey is simply uninformed, as when, on a swing through New Hampshire, he was asked a direct question about the Seabrook nuclear power plant, and didn't know the specifics of the controversy. It could be argued that his response was a refreshing alternative to the usual vamping, but Seabrook has been an issue presidential candidates have had to address in New England for years, and the papers wrote about Kerrey's ignorance unflatteringly. When he was in Los Angeles a week later for a fund-raiser, a veteran California Democrat took him aside and advised, "Don't let another Seabrook happen in this campaign."

And sometimes the evolving politician gets caught en route between destinations. His Persian Gulf vote was cast by the Vietnam-colored Kerrey, who believed most American intervention is futile. While he stands by that vote—which may in the end prove to have been the right one—he has acknowledged that Vietnam has influenced him a little too much. He now says that asking Americans to fight overseas is justified if it is "for somebody's freedom. It's gonna have to be for a cause."

While he was no supporter of the Reagan-Bush defense buildup, he is a born-again believer in the Cold War's containment theory. He pointedly describes George Bush as a "child of the Cold War" who still has "one foot in the Cold War," but he also now enthusiastically endorses Ronald Reagan's assessment of

the Soviet Union as "the evil empire"—a bit of rhetoric whose denigration was required Democratic dogma for eight years. Of course, most Democratic senators probably agree, these days, in light of events. But Kerrey comes out and says that visits to Congress by Václav Havel and Lech Walesa brought about an outright awakening in him. "There is no question that there has been a revelation when I see Václav Havel come before a joint session of Congress. I don't want to work with the government that might be imprisoning Vietnam's Václav Havel."

Some suggest it's an inconsistent point of view for a former anti-war protester ("If I had to go into the military now feeling the way I do," he said back then, "I would go to jail first"). But Kerrey is typically blunt. "They should be sympathetic that I was a twenty-five-year-old, ground-pounded SEAL with a leg blown off." The government of Vietnam, he now says as he watches the Bush administration edge toward normalization with Hanoi, "is imprisoning people, they are abusing people's rights. . . . Communism will not survive in Vietnam." Then could he imagine, hypothetically, a justifiable Vietnam War? "If we put out an appeal to the people of Vietnam that we're with them, we're solid with them, and we believe in their freedom right now, we don't have to go to war."

Perhaps it was the newer Kerrey who told a Los Angeles group that "I don't think a Democratic agenda ought to simply say, 'We're going to make cuts here in defenses and slop it all over into social programs,' or that we of necessity have to have a tax increase." But then, he does have a tax increase (5 percent) in his health-care proposal, and how would he pay for all those social programs—job training, prenatal care, at-home care, Head Start, and so on—that he talks about? A hint: he told that same L.A. crowd that he would cut defense spending in the next ten years by 40 to 50 percent.

Kerrey seeks advice from a broad range of friends in diverse fields, from agent Michael Ovitz to Harvard child psychiatrist Robert Coles, and fellow Nebraskan Warren Buffett is his most influential economic adviser (among other notions, Buffett has gotten Kerrey interested in a consumption tax, to encourage productive investment, rather than indebted spending). But the most notable influence in the Kerrey campaign is probably that of his friend Gary Hart.

There are several former Hart staffers in the Kerrey camp, including senior adviser Billy Shore. Kerrey was annoyed to hear that *Newsweek* had listed Hart as one of his political heroes—but only because he hadn't told them that. "Any politician doesn't immediately come to mind" as a "hero," Kerrey said, characteristically.

But instead of distancing himself from Hart, for fear of a ruboff from the Donna Rice taint, Kerrey happily acknowledges tapping into an underused asset, whose disgrace was perhaps undue. "He's as good as we've got right now on foreign policy," he said one evening in New Hampshire, a place where Hart's own ambitions were once tested, before he was brought down by the Monkey Business. "He's been to the Soviet Union an awful lot; he knows the detail of life over there and what's possible. . . . [He] was out in front on military reform, and understands that as well. No, I think he's a reliable source. Just as Richard Nixon's a reliable source. And Gary Hart by no means was disgraced in the manner that Richard Nixon was. He simply made an error and decided to get out of the race, and that collapsed him in a way that was surprising, given the nature of the event. But it in no way damaged, at least in my mind, his credibility. Not with me."

"I think it's very, very magnanimous of him, the way he speaks of Gary Hart," says Winger, who is, of course, another of Kerrey's advisers. "And, you know, not that it's not true. But somebody else in his position, it wouldn't be hard to imagine them not wanting to be associated."

Despite the pool of talent Kerrey draws on, some watching his campaign have suggested that the addition of a strong top policy adviser might help his issues seem more fully formulated, an impression he'll need to make when he comes up against Bill Clinton, the Arkansas governor, who has prepared for the national stage like the A student he is. Clinton comes off as a fellow who needs a U-Haul truck to carry his policy proposals around; sometimes it seems that Kerrey keeps his in a coin purse.

At the Harvard event, for example, Kerrey used the forum to detail his Health USA proposal, and to illuminate the broad thinking behind it: that if Americans don't have to worry about their medical costs, they can develop skills, find work, and productivity will soar. It went over well enough, but when students began asking him questions about other concerns—from the AIDS crisis to urban blight—his answer was, essentially, My health-care plan will take care of all that.

On the other hand, a national health-care plan is a big-league issue perfectly suited to Kerrey's style: politics drawn from personal experience. At every stop in his campaign, he tells those gathered what he told students at the University of Iowa: "One of the things I'll talk about a great deal in this campaign is health care. It comes as a consequence of direct personal experience. I came back from the war in Vietnam in 1969. . . . Anytime I need health care I go to the Veterans Administration to get it. I know I can go to the V.A., and because of that certainty, I worry about my job training, I worry about my own ability to extract the income I want. I worry about other things, not about whether I'll be able to pay the bill."

There may be people who work for Kerrey in Nebraska who wish that if he is going to rely on personal experience to formulate health-care policy he would look through the other end of the telescope and see himself not as a patient but as an employer. The nine restaurants that Kerrey and Dean Rasmussen own and operate are non-union shops—most restaurants in Nebraska are non-union—that do not provide fully paid health-care coverage for their seven hundred or so employees.

When I asked Kerrey what kind of health coverage his employees had through work, he said, "I don't know," and noted that he'd not been active in the business since 1982, when he became governor. He said that it was possible that some, or many, of his employees weren't covered, because his insurance company would not allow him to include part-time workers and still get the group insurance rate.

But isn't part-time status inherent in many of those jobs?

"Sure."

Can't you as the employer address that somehow?

"Not and get a group rate from my insurance company."

So when you speak with poignancy of Americans' working without insurance or facing welfare, you may in fact be talking about people who work for you?

"Yeah."

I asked Rasmussen, who operates the restaurants, about the matter and he said, "We have a health plan available for our people, you bet." What he means is that some of Grandmother's workers are able to buy into the company health plan if they qualify, and that the company may or may not help pay for it, based on a series of criteria, including hours worked and length of employment. But Rasmussen would not say which or how many workers qualified, how many participated,

Bob Kerrey

and how much the company contributed.

"It's really varied—that's why I can't give you a straight answer," Rasmussen said. "We've got several waitresses, some of the cooks—some of the stores have a lot of them, some a few of them—who have chosen to be part of the plan."

Jenny Brown, vice president of the tiny Hotel Employees, Restaurant Employees, and Bartenders Union Local 264, in Omaha, says that Grandmother's employees "have medical plans available if workers want to pay for it out of their own pockets." She notes that "very few are on the plan, because very few can afford to come up with $121 a month for medical benefits."

The next time I saw Kerrey, he said that he'd looked into it and found that the company's payroll cost on employees' health insurance averaged 3 percent. If Jenny Brown's guess that monthly participation costs $121 is correct, that means that a cook or a waitress making $8 an hour (a very liberal supposition) is spending 15 percent or more of his or her take-home pay on insurance. Kerrey acknowledges that he and Dean would be forced to pay more than they do now if his Health USA became law. While it's true that the restaurant business is a business of thin margins, it is also true that Kerrey and Rasmussen are millionaires, and that one of them is running for president on the compassion ticket.

There were moments early in the campaign when people listening to Kerrey's message thought he was a touch too compassionate—and that he was misdirecting it toward George Bush. At every stop, Kerrey would tell the crowd that "the enemy isn't George Bush. The enemy is not the president. The enemy is our own pessimism about our ability to make a difference."

Indeed, there was a growing sense of wonderment as to just why this candidate, so known for heartfelt passion and emotional politics, came across as an earnest civics instructor on the hustings. Unwelcome memories of Michael Dukakis's wimpy turn-the-other-cheek response to the Bush attack in '88 began to resonate loudly.

But as time passed, the adrenaline began to kick in, and Kerrey's rhetoric fired up. At a fund-raiser cocktail party in Los Angeles hosted by Sally Field, and attended by a mix of show-business people, politicians, and money folk—liberals all—Kerrey brought out the stick and laid into Bush.

"George Bush has been successful as a politician because he's done two things in his life, and in this campaign I will expose it," Kerrey said. "He's been successful at putting together a coalition of people who are against things in America. Recently, Duke"—and he fairly spit the word out as the crowd gave a collective "Ugh!" in response—"David Duke, finished second in the Louisiana governorship. In the Republican Party, Dan Quayle and President Bush are trying to distance themselves from David Duke. Well, they've been watering that tree for the last twenty-four years with hatred and divisive rhetoric, talking about quotas, talking about race as if this nation should not strive to provide equal opportunity for all of us! And now that tree has borne the fruit of David Duke, and in this campaign we'll make sure that Americans understand that if your policy is based upon hatred that hatred indeed is what you'll yield."

The Hollywood bunch loved it, and it was plain that Kerrey enjoyed revving the engines. At the time, Mario Cuomo, whose fire-breathing ability is universally conceded, was still mulling his own candidacy, and Kerrey said he would welcome the challenge. "If I can't beat Mario Cuomo," he said, "I can't beat George Bush."

It may come only in bursts, but Bob Kerrey has proved he has political magic. On the night of his Senate victory, in 1988, he stepped onto the stage of the Peony Park ballroom in Omaha and did something that might have ended his national career before it started. He thanked his supporters, three thousand strong, and then dedicated a song to his buddies from the SEALS.

He sang it. All four verses of "And the Band Played 'Waltzing Matilda,' " a sad, soulful Australian ballad about a World War I soldier who gets his legs blown off at Gallipoli.

It was an extraordinary moment in the age of safe, soulless politics, and a telling testament to Kerrey's instinct. Few politicians would have dared such a gesture, if for no other reason than fear of the hideous result if the move fell flat. (One dull speech at the '88 convention was enough for some people to write off Bill Clinton's national future.) Not only did Kerrey pull it off, he had everybody in the place sobbing. A TV reporter had to gulp back the tears to sign off from her report after Kerrey, a cappella and slightly off-key, sang the words:

> Then a big Turkey shell knocked me ass over head
> And when I awoke in my hospital bed
> I saw what it had done
> And I wished I were dead.
> Never knew there were worse things than dyin'. . . .
> No more Waltzing Matilda for me.

That scene is part of a videotape handed out to reporters covering Kerrey's campaign, as if to let them know that behind the sometimes stilted speeches and the innate distance, there's wildfire ablaze. And long before the presidential campaign, that tape made the rounds of Democratic Party leaders, convincing many that anyone who'd dare a stunt like that, and who could pull off the moment, had something special, something rare among politicians.

But something well known to flamenco greats everywhere. □

Costner in Control

(Continued from page 76) his famous gambles by appearing in *JFK*.

JFK is a dense, flashback-laden, three-hour-long unraveling of the riddle surrounding the assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy. It became a controversial cause célèbre even before it was in the can, for like some of Oliver Stone's other movies—*Salvador*, *Born on the Fourth of July*, *The Doors*—this one bends historical fact to prove that America is an essentially corrupt society.

Though Stone compares his movie to Akira Kurosawa's *Rashomon*—in which the same event is seen from several points of view—*JFK* rests on Stone's apparent conviction that Kennedy was the victim of an elaborate, government-sanctioned conspiracy to stop him from withdrawing American forces from Vietnam. Knowledgeable critics who got a peek at an early version of the script dubbed the movie *Dances with Facts*.

The real Jim Garrison was widely perceived to be a publicity-seeking southern buffoon, whose case against Clay Shaw was dismissed with the contempt it deserved by a jury in less than one hour. I was curious to see how Costner would cope with the problem of portraying a his-

Costner in Control

torical personage of less than heroic proportions, and I was shown some of the first edited scenes.

Costner wears makeup that transforms him into a bespectacled middle-aged man with graying temples. In a scene with Sissy Spacek, who plays his wife, he comes across as flat, but in his long, idealistic courtroom speech at the end, he throws the sort of emotional knockout punch Jimmy Stewart threw in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. He turns the off-the-wall Garrison into the safe-and-sound Kevin Costner—a lone hero battling against overwhelming odds in order to find the truth and re-establish the American Way.

"Kevin is a highly underrated actor in the sense that it's very subtle what he's doing," Stone tells me during a break in looping. "Kevin's presence, like Gary Cooper's, is a very relaxed one. He's comfortable with himself. He serves my function perfectly, because he anchors the movie in conventional morality."

Costner is standing at a lectern in a dark room in the looping studio, where he is doing what is called automated dialogue replacement. He is wearing eyeglasses with round reddish frames, peering at a screen that shows the exact moment of impact of the bullet that blew away the head of our thirty-fifth president. Costner is holding a green earphone to the side of his head, listening to the original production sound track of a Jim Garrison voice-over, which he is trying to improve upon.

The film is rewound, and the bullet rips back Kennedy's head once again, and there is a three-beep cue for Costner to begin. "What happens then?" the actor recites in his high-pitched Southern California accent, to which he has added a honeyed New Orleans drawl. "*Pandemonium!*"

He looks over at Oliver Stone, sitting glum-faced in a glass-walled booth.

"I think I was a little lazy with that 'then,' " Costner tells him. "Let me do one more." He shakes his wrist to loosen up, then shakes his hips. He goes over the same line eight times, until he gets it right.

I ask him later why he lent his considerable prestige to one of the most dubious of all the dubious conspiracy theories.

"Oliver called me when I was in England making *Robin Hood*," he says. "I said I wouldn't meet with him without first having read something. He sent it over and I read it. I didn't know what to think about it. It was so dense. . . . I let my wife, Cindy, read it, and I told her that I just didn't feel so strongly about this movie that I'd upset our big plans to go away together camping in the mountains with our kids.

"She's the one who wanted me to do it," he goes on. "And that came as a surprise. She's never been so outspoken about something in my career. I know that she felt it was that important. She knew I was on the fence. She felt it was about the country, and I ultimately came to feel the same."

For Costner, *JFK* will probably not turn out to be a major gamble after all. Stone may often be blinded by his anger, but he is also a highly skilled moviemaker, and with *JFK* he is tapping into a deep, almost paranoid distrust Americans have come to feel about all constituted authority, especially about their government in Washington. What's more, a Gallup poll commissioned by Warner Bros., the distributor of *JFK*, points out that 73 percent of the American public rejects the Warren Commission's lone-gunman theory and believes that there was a conspiracy to assassinate John F. Kennedy. "You could examine it point by point and discredit and dismantle everything in *JFK*," Costner says, "but the movie as a whole has an emotional truth."

Last spring, the British tabloids had a field day with a story that Costner got into girl trouble while he was in England shooting *Robin Hood*. "There's sort of a cottage industry in London that centers on girls who hang around various clubs and lure men to bed, and their payment is to sell the story to a newspaper," says Nigel Dempster, Britain's leading gossip columnist. "They are looking for people like Kevin Costner. But under no circumstances was he on the loose, procuring women, constantly randy."

"I want to read you a quote I got from a producer you know," I tell Costner. "He said, 'Women are throwing themselves at Kevin. He fights it off. You've got a handsome young man who's a giant movie star. You can imagine what's being thrown at him everyplace he goes.' " I let the words sink in, then ask, "True?"

"There are two kinds of women," he says. "Women inside the business—I understand their desire to get close to me. I'm pretty empathetic to them, I understand their motives. A woman in the business who would approach me sexually, she's after one thing: work. Outside the business, it's more problematical if a beautiful woman approaches me.

"I know there are all these stories about how women are throwing themselves at me," he continues. "When I was making *Robin Hood* in England, there were these stories in the tabloids about me sleeping with women. They were off-the-wall. Maybe I'd think about these things differently if I didn't have a family that can be hurt. My wife and I have had to learn, after sixteen years, how to handle this new situation. We grew up together. We met in our teens. There's a big strain on us of just how much publicity will come with success. It's a strain we haven't dealt with before.

"Let's face it, the public can only take this good-guy story about me for just so long. It's wearing thin. I feel overexposed right now. People say I should shut it down. If I never did another day of press and publicity, it wouldn't bother me. I can see it coming to an end. I'm becoming more of a recluse. I'm getting pretty close to the saturation point. I'm close to being what's not hot."

You don't get much hotter than Kevin Costner. Only a year ago, I was in Los Angeles, and Topic A among movie people was Michael Ovitz's unsurpassed talent to attract superstar clients. Not a single person I talked to then remarked that Costner was on Ovitz's list. Today, many would rank Costner as one of the most powerful men in Hollywood. A major producer told me, "I finance movies, and if Kevin Costner was in my office with a big director, a big producer, and a big writer, and he asked them to leave the room, and he said to me, 'Hey, I love your movie, I'd love to do it, but I can't do it with those three guys. I have to direct myself and bring in my own producer'—if he said that, I'd have a big problem. I'd have to fire those three guys."

"You have to understand what's going on in the movie business," says Larry Gordon, the producer who made *Field of Dreams*. "Grosses have been horrible. The marketing and production costs are much too high, and there is a theory that people only turn out for 'event movies.' What is an event movie? The easiest way to describe it is, it's a good movie with either Arnold Schwarzenegger or Tom Cruise or Kevin Costner. Now you're talking star power in Hollywood."

"Kevin's an enormous force in the industry," says Jim Wilson, who ten years ago cast Costner in one of his first films, *Stacy's Knights*, and is now his partner in Tig Productions. "Kevin doesn't live by the rules. If there's a rule to be broken, he likes to take that tack. He understands the clout he has, and he's going to use it. He's not sitting back on his laurels, saying, 'Gee, look how lucky I am. Look where I came from.' "

"While we were shooting *Robin Hood*," recalls one member of the crew, "Kevin's parents came onto the set to see how their son was doing. They're very family-oriented, but I felt there was an edge there. You have to remember that Kevin's brother, Dan, is also a very successful guy, an investor who's become a millionaire. They were very charming, nice people, but you just had the feeling—from the father especially—of all that incredible drive."

During the filming of *Dances*, Costner and his brother heard that legalized gambling would soon begin in Deadwood, South Dakota. They bought a building, restored it, and opened it as a casino called Midnight Star.

"My grandfather was a big, tall, good-looking man, one of nine brothers with names like Ilbert and Albert, Orville and Norville, Dewey and Blacky," Costner says. "They lived in Oklahoma. My grandfather married my grandmother when she was fourteen. The German spelling of their name was Koster, the same as General Custer's real German name. That's kind of funny, given my feelings about Native Americans. While I was making *Dances*, I had this nightmare that I was part of Custer's Last Stand."

Costner grew up hearing romantic tales about "the Cherokee background" of his paternal grandfather. As a boy, Kevin relished the notion that he was part Indian, because, as he has said, he thought Indians were "more clever, in some ways more resourceful." The fact that the story came from Kevin's adored father, Bill, who until recently worked as a lineman for Southern California Edison, made it more appealing. The only problem with this widely circulated story is that it is probably not true. "My mom is always saying to my father, 'Bill, please, you don't have any Indian blood,' " Costner admits.

There is another family story, about how the same grandfather was a rich farmer who owned bulging silos until he lost everything in the Dust Bowl, and ended up as an Okie digging ditches in California. "My father would never talk about his father's loss of money," Costner says.

Whatever the truth of the various versions of the Costner saga, there seems little doubt that Kevin grew up feeling dispossessed. This was aggravated by the fact that Bill Costner was constantly being transferred from place to place by his employer. Between the ninth and twelfth grades, Kevin changed schools four times. "Those were unstable years," he says. "I was always trying to make new friends each year, and I was never in the clique, which looked pretty appealing from outside. I was real short as a sophomore in high school—five feet two," says the actor, who now stands a bit over six feet. "That's the time you get your license, and it was hard for me to drive, hard for me to reach the pedal. Also, it was embarrassing with girls, who were all taller than me. I wanted to play basketball, but I was a little guy. I was a late developer. Physical maturity came late."

He went to California State University at Fullerton, where he enrolled as a marketing major and joined a fraternity, Delta Chi. "I didn't date at all," he recalls. "I met Cindy in my second year. I was immediately struck by her presence, her aura, and I was cognizant that she couldn't be struck by me. I figured somebody this beautiful would not be interested in me. But she kind of forced the action in terms of sightings on campus. One day she came by the frat house with some butter-pecan ice cream. The only clean clothes I had was this wet suit, so I came downstairs in my wet suit, and we ate the butter-pecan ice cream.

"There was no contact, no physical contact, and then I finally got up the nerve to ask her to go out. We were on our way to the movies to see *Funny Girl*, and on the way I took her home to meet my parents. I was just really proud that this girl would go out with me. I wanted to show my parents, See, I'm not such a fuck-up."

I interrupt to ask him, "Did you ever sleep with any girl before you graduated and got married?"

"I had slept with girls before I married," he says very slowly, and not entirely convincingly. "But not many," he adds. "I wasn't hugely experienced." He smiles. "That's why I don't have much sympathy for those high-school movies in which the kid can't get laid. Hell, I couldn't, either."

Unbeknownst to his parents, Kevin was secretly appearing in community-theater productions and auditioning for roles at the South Coast Actors Co-Op. Acting wasn't exactly his father's idea of a job for a man, and years later, when Costner good-naturedly appeared in drag when he was roasted as the Hasty Pudding Theatricals Man of the Year at Harvard, he said, "My father was terribly concerned that this kind of thing would happen as a result of my acting."

He quit his first job in marketing after one month and decided that he was going to dedicate himself full-time to acting.

"Kevin and I were in the same acting class," says Greg Avellone, who now works for Costner's production company. "Kevin was full of self-confidence. If he had any doubts, he kept them to himself. He really felt that if he pursued it long enough the doors would open for him."

They didn't—at least not right away. He was twenty-seven, with one sexploitation movie to his credit, before he was finally cast as a gambler in *Stacy's Knights*, a low-budget film that came and went without leaving much of an impression. Though his part in *The Big Chill* ended up on the cutting-room floor, Costner claims that he never became discouraged. "I knew when I was cast in *The Big Chill* I had lodged myself in that position where I wanted to be—in the company of good actors and a good director," he says.

He had also lodged himself in the memory of Wally Nicita. "I met him when I was casting *Mike's Murder*, and he came into my office and did a cold reading for me. I explained what the movie was about, what his character was about, and he went outside and took five minutes. He came back and read, and he was fantastic. And I couldn't believe my good fortune in finding someone who was naturally as talented and charismatic. He's so good he makes it look easy."

Thanks to Nicita, the Hollywood grapevine began to hum on Costner's behalf. Nicita's assistant was married to Gary Lucchesi, then an agent at William Morris, so Lucchesi got the first tip on the promising new actor. "Wally called Gary," says J. J. Harris, who was then a secretary. "Gary took Kevin to lunch, and later I asked, 'How was it?' and he said, 'This guy's somebody special.' And when Gary left to become an executive at Tri-Star, I became Kevin's agent."

He was thirty years old and the father of two daughters before his career finally began to click into place. Then it all happened in the space of five years: he played the loopy cowboy in *Silverado* and the fast-talking frat brother in *Fandango* in 1985; the sexy Soviet spy in *No Way Out* and the homebody Eliot Ness in *The Untouchables* in 1987, the introspective catcher in *Bull Durham* in 1988; the forlorn son in *Field of Dreams* in 1989; and Lieutenant Dunbar, who wants to see the West before it vanishes, in *Dances with Wolves* in 1990.

"I wouldn't give credit to any one person for developing Kevin's career," J. J. Harris says. "This guy already had his destiny mapped out. He started to develop a relationship with Mike Ovitz probably for a year before he left me. Mike Ovitz is the single most powerful agent in the business, and Kevin felt he needed things that Ovitz's power could provide."

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"I'm going through this life just one time, and I'm trying to live it as complete as I can with the baggage of celebrity," Costner says. "I don't want to cry in your milk, but I never think of myself as an actor. It's only when I'm with a friend and someone shoves a camera in his hand and then they put their arms around my shoulder and order my friend to take their picture with Kevin Costner that I realize what I've become, what's happened to me these past few months."

"Fame has forced Kevin to reassess a lot of stuff," says Jim Wilson, his partner. "There's a great deal more available to him in every way. He can make changes and impact a large population. Suddenly, he has this loaded gun, where ten years ago he didn't."

Costner and his wife have become involved in various philanthropies: a Native American museum in the Dakotas, a group that director Larry Kasdan works with for the hearing-impaired. In addition, Costner has begun to talk about even grander projects.

"You drive in in the morning, and he has nineteen ideas that are mind-boggling," says Wilson. "He's constantly exploring. He has very original ideas, outside the motion-picture business. One of them is in regards to a distribution type of network he wants to set up with the Soviet Union."

I ask Costner about this Soviet project. "I made up my mind that I wouldn't talk about that," he says. "It's not a fully baked idea. I brought it up with some people in Washington, and I hired a guy in Washington. It's in the embryonic stage."

But what exactly is the "it" he's talking about? He refuses to say, which leaves the impression that it's something very Utopian, something very Robert Redford–ish.

"He's not at all like Redford," says one of his advisers. "Redford takes advice from nobody, and he's suffered for it. Redford thumbs his nose at the industry. Kevin does not. Kevin genuinely likes this business and many of the people in it. He intends to make one or two movies a year, peppering the commercial ones with the controversial ones. He knows he's the biggest star in the world right now because he appeals to every common denominator. He knows what's good for him. But because of that Steve McQueen streak, he doesn't always want to do it, and who knows? The subconscious part of him could push him to be bad."

"Some people think you grow up and all you want to be is a millionaire," Costner says. "First of all, a million isn't a million anymore; it's half a million after taxes. So you have to make two. And the idea that if you make it you'll retire means that you don't enjoy doing what you're doing. My idea of my life isn't that it always has to be upward and outward. It can be inward. The last days of your life can be now, today. That's a pretty healthy way to realize that life is a gift, and you've got to live your life as a person, not as an actor. It's so narcissistic to talk about all this. For every door that closes in your life because of celebrity, there are others that open up." □

Paris Clout

(Continued from page 97) his volatile father, called in the movie, as in actuality, Henri Langmann.

Playing himself with a gentle humor and self-deprecation, Berri re-enacted his rejection of a future in his father's Paris shop, and relived some early misadventures in both his love life and his career. These included being offered a part in an American movie—"O.K., Claude, we'll make a star out of you! A star!"—and subsequently being tossed out because of his "inability to speak the language of Shakespeare." (Not yet wholly corrected. Our conversations were bilingual, despite my own clumsiness in the language of Molière.)

The movie ends with young Claude, dreaming of success, planning to make a movie starring his father, a project thwarted by his early death. Was this true?, I asked incredulously.

"Everything in the film is true," Berri told me.

The last shot is of his father's gravestone. Why had he himself taken the name Berri?

"When I wanted to be an actor, I wanted a name that was easy to remember. A French name," Berri said. "Like Maurice Chevalier."

Real life, reel life. At eighteen, Berri appeared as a silhouette in Jean Renoir's *French Cancan,* and then proceeded through tiny movie and theater roles and produced his first play, with his father's help, at twenty-five. A fiasco. Four years later, he directed a comedy short, *The Chicken,* which won him an Academy Award. It did not impress him until he discovered this was the same thing as an Oscar. *The Chicken* had been made for $10,000, which had been borrowed from two friends, and Berri produced it himself. This was the beginning of Renn Productions, named after Katharina Renn, who lent Berri some of the initial capital, and also the beginning of his first marriage, to Anne-Marie Rassam, a young woman born in Beirut.

The Two of Us was Berri's first feature, and it was a huge success in France. People were beginning to notice that the serious, soft-spoken thirty-two-year-old was capable of formidable focus and was possessed of highly defined ambitions.

In 1968, the Czech director Miloš Forman, who had been widely praised for *Loves of a Blonde,* got out of Prague just ahead of the Russian tanks. A Paris apartment was found for him by Berri. He began work on a project for Paramount to be called *Taking Off.* He would direct and Berri would produce.

One day, Forman, in great excitement, played Berri a record album of the new musical *Hair.* He wanted to write the show into his script for *Taking Off.* This was the sixties, remember. Berri thought that was a terrific idea, and took it to Paramount's then head of production, Robert Evans, whose reaction, according to Claude Berri, was "Why not? If you get the rights."

Berri called *Hair*'s co-authors, Gerome Ragni and James Rado. They asked for $1.5 million, plus 10 percent of the gross. Berri took the proposition to Evans. "He said, 'Why not? If you get the rights . . .' "

Ragni and Rado were in a Chateau Marmont bungalow on Sunset Strip. Berri and Miloš Forman flew out. It was Berri's first visit to Los Angeles. "We had a one o'clock appointment. But nobody was in the bungalow," Berri said. "After about twenty minutes a nude girl walked through the lobby. We waited some more."

The writers finally showed up, but not alone.

"They were with a guru. He was very important. He was very kind. We took coffee. After ten minutes, they said that the guru must play the tarot to see if it is good that Miloš direct *Hair* and Claude produce," Berri remembered.

"So we looked at each other. The guru made the tarot, and it was *terrible.* Terribly bad. The tarot said no! No question that Miloš direct and Claude produce. No one million and a half. No 10 percent of the gross. *Nothing.*

"O.K. They were very kind. Ten minutes later they said try again. So the guru made the tarot again. And the second time it was *worse than the first.*" The pair left the world's movie capital empty-handed.

In 1975, Berri entered into partnership with his brother-in-law, Paul Rassam, and began building Renn Productions into an ever more powerful entity. He was doing so using methods that would be considered fairly feckless in the American entertainment industry.

It seems telling that the French language does not even have a word that means "entertainment" in the above sense. "When Claude produces a movie, he chooses the artist. Then he removes himself from the scene. He does not interfere," one French-film-industry person remarked. He simply lets them get on with it, even when—notably as with Polanski's high-budget *Tess*—failure could imperil his whole enterprise. Berri's longtime sound mixer, Dominique Hennequin, told me that he may show up only three times a week to see how work is progressing.

What if things get unglued?

"There are no confrontations. He just looks more sad than usual."

A technician said, "*Il a besoin de tendresse.*"

He needs tenderness. Not an emotion in lavish supply in the movie business.

Berri has also from time to time returned to his first profession, acting. In Patrice Chéreau's *The Wounded Man,* a strong, dark-toned story of an adolescent boy's embrace of gay street life, Berri appears in a short, powerful role as "The Client." He behaves obnoxiously, shows his fat, hairy little tum, and his last line is "Let me suck you off." In the unlikely event that Hollywood remakes *The Wounded Man,* I somehow can't see its producer taking this part.

Miloš Forman ended up making *Hair* ten years after the Chateau Marmont meeting, but not with Berri. After the Pagnol movies, though, Berri produced and Forman directed *Valmont,* the second of the two screen adaptations of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses,* released in 1989. The box-office returns indicated that Berri and Forman should have listened to that guru. By the time of *Valmont,* though, Berri had sold 50 percent of Renn, and was launched into the world of Art.

The Paris headquarters of Jérôme Seydoux, the man who bought half of Claude Berri's company in 1986, is on the Boulevard Malesherbes, a short walk from the Place de la Madeleine. You cannot actually see the neoclassical Madeleine itself right now. What you see is a huge billboard bearing a scale graphic showing the way the Madeleine will look when restored. It seems very appropriate to the brand-new Europe, of which Jérôme Seydoux's company, Chargeurs, is a successful part.

Seydoux is trim, in his later fifties, with blue eyes, short gray hair, and the guarded smile of somebody who both relishes and is cautious of attention. His office is hung with three Dubuffets, a Tapiès, an enormous Nicolas De Staël. He was eager to talk about Claude Berri, but otherwise reticent. "Family is something which should stay private," he said. "Even if a number of things are known."

A number of things *are* known. Seydoux is the oldest of three brothers from a Protestant family in Alsace. Their grandfather Marcel Schlumberger made a huge oil fortune, not from drilling or shipping the stuff but from supplying the crucial technology. Schlumberger had a son, Pierre, and two daughters (the de Ménils of Houston and New York, also, it happens, deeply involved in avant-garde art, come from another Schlumberger marriage), but a dozen years after the death of the patriarch, control of the company passed to Jean Riboud, an ascetic from Lyons, one of those curious business visionaries tossed up by postwar Europe.

It was Riboud's decision that Jérôme Seydoux and his brothers, Nicolas and Michel, should leave the family firm. All have done well enough on their own that they, along with their mother, pop up separately on those French-rich lists that their countrypeople find as fascinating as do the readers of those in *Fortune* and *Forbes.* In 1988, for instance, *L'Expansion,* a business glossy, listed Jérôme at No. 15.

Michel, the youngest brother, who was the first one into the media business, started a movie-production company in 1971. In 1974, Nicolas, the middle brother, bought Gaumont, a famous chain of cinemas which also owned studios. Jérôme announced that he was not interested in the entertainment field, and took control of Chargeurs, which had huge holdings in textiles and transportation. In 1985, though, President Mitterrand let it be known that he was going to allow one of France's state-owned television channels to be taken private. Jérôme Seydoux, who is that very European phenomenon, a liberal magnate, and is close to Mitterrand, acquired the franchise in partnership with the Italian media man Silvio Berlusconi. The new channel was called La Cinq—"The Five." Michel Seydoux began acquiring movies for it. He introduced Jérôme to Claude Berri. La Cinq was inaugurated with one of Berri's productions.

What happened then was thoroughly French. Jacques Chirac, a right-winger, became prime minister. He quickly revoked Seydoux's contract, and handed it over to Robert Hersant, the very right-wing owner of *Le Figaro.* Jérôme Seydoux was thus out of the media world. It was at this juncture that he was approached by Claude Berri, who was looking for a buyer for half of Renn.

There was a pause when I asked Seydoux why he got involved. "We thought we could work together," he said finally. "We are certainly not the boss. He has kept his freedom, which I think is very important.

"We can help by giving him and his partners the opportunities to do things outside France. It is a business where you have to look outside. But it is a tricky business, the movie business. It is full of *ogres.* It is not sufficient to make a good movie." He laughed dryly. "What is marvelous about the association with Claude is that he has ideas. And he is not alone. He has partners. I don't think the ideas should come from me. I'm not so sure I would have good ideas."

Seydoux is now deeply involved with BSkyB, the satellite television network, in which he is a partner with Rupert Murdoch, and which he believes represents the future of European TV. It also, of course, represents a giant market for movies. If the three Seydoux joined forces—"Seydoux Bros.," which Michel once humorously compared to Warner Bros.—would they be the biggest entertainment company in France?

"In movies certainly. But I am not so sure in this business that size is really the answer."

This is Berri's thinking, too, and very un-Hollywood at that. "But he is not American," Seydoux said. "He is pure French product."

He gave his bray of a laugh.

As I was leaving, we looked at the paintings. There was a Warhol in the outer office: *4 Black Marilyns.* "I was less modern," Jérôme Seydoux said. "Claude helped me become more modern. And still he is more modern than I am."

Claude Berri's Paris apartment is on the Rue de Lille, a handsome, narrow street. The apartment is large, but unfussy. There is a paperback of Zola's *Germinal,* a future project, and a clutter of toys, the property of Darius, his five-year-old son by his fiancée, Sylvie Gautrelet. (Berri is now divorced from Anne-Marie, although her brother remains his partner.)

Paris Clout

There is also a present for Darius, a drawing by the New York artist Robert Mangold. Its stark, uncompromising shape and the abundance of art on the wall mark the journey that Berri set out on at the age of fifty-two, just six years ago.

Berri's first acquisitions after cashing in half of his company had been the sort of work that most collectors of modern art begin with: safe, "classical" work. He bought, for instance, an excellent Picasso. His first more personal encounter was with the raw, fierce work of the Frenchman Jean Dubuffet. "I spent a year only interested in Dubuffet," Berri told me. "His evolution." He bought a number of canvases by the artist and forever hung and rehung them, examining the changing effects of the light.

Then *Jean de Florette* brought him to Manhattan, and Berri was taken to meet Leo Castelli, who, Berri observed, "was fifty when he started his New York gallery." Castelli took Berri to the exhibition commemorating his thirty years as a dealer, which occupied his Greene Street gallery. It was a remarkable show, and it was also Berri's first experience of the American avant-garde. "I think I communicated some pride in what I had done," Castelli told me. "I looked at it without completely understanding it, but one painting pleased me," Berri said. "It was a Twombly." This was Cy Twombly's *The Italians,* a spare, vibrant piece that had been lent to Castelli for the show by the Museum of Modern Art. "I said, 'Leo! I want a Twombly!' "

It was at his second meeting with Castelli that Berri, a man of strong impulses, asked to make a documentary about him. Castelli agreed, and Berri sold the project to La Sept, the French cultural TV channel, and conducted his first interview. Berri did the interviewing himself, and, as his questions indicate, he was still remarkably uninformed about the avant-garde. But he plunged ahead into the art jungle. "He was very fast. It was like in hot fever," says Karsten Greve, the Cologne dealer who in the end found Berri a Twombly.

Inevitably, Berri started by acquiring work that he would later change his mind about—all beginning collectors do—but he very soon alit on the artists who are the core of his collection today. They include Dubuffet, Twombly, the Greek artist Jannis Kounellis, and the Italian Lucio Fontana, best known for slashing and gouging the surfaces of his work.

Berri's collection is most remarkable for its monochromes, paintings that consist of one allover color. The first monochrome he acquired was by Yves Klein, a Parisian who died in his mid-thirties and who was famous/infamous for such pieces as his *Anthropometries,* body prints produced by his "living brushes"—naked, paint-smeared young women who wriggled on canvas according to his instructions. His "Monochromes" were panels of pure color, usually in an electric azure which the artist claimed to have copyrighted as "International Klein Blue."

From Klein, Berri moved on to the artist's rival Piero Manzoni, who outdid Klein by making monochromes of no color at all, namely white. It was natural that Berri would also require one of Ad Reinhardt's black paintings. He got one after finding himself seated next to the artist's widow at a dinner at the Guggenheim.

Then Berri discovered the "white" paintings of Robert Ryman.

Ryman, a New Yorker, dislikes having his work described as monochromatic, because he uses other colors along with the white, and it is the ghostly traces of those colors that make his surfaces pulse with life. His touch can be as creamy as Manzoni's, but it is more often austere and feathery. Berri bought a Ryman, took it back to Paris, and hung it. It palled on him. He had reached a level of response where one monochrome was vastly less effective than another.

"Then a woman came up to me at Sotheby's during an auction," Berri said. " 'Do you want a Ryman?' I said yes. She said, 'Come with me.' So we go to this place, and I saw this triptych by Ryman. It was during the night, with electric light, and Ryman you should see in natural light, so when I got it home I was disappointed again."

Berri returned both these paintings to the marketplace and they were sold. Then, shortly before the premiere of *Valmont,* he went to a Christie's auction and saw the Ryman he wanted. "I put the most important bid ever for a Ryman at auction," he told me, still gleeful. "Two million one! I broke the record!"

Some points deserve to be made here. Various art-worlders deplored Berri's quick resale of the two earlier Rymans as damaging to the market. Others saw the Christie's purchase, which quadrupled the artist's price, as one more late-eighties folly. The art world—including almost every artist—has grown cynical about collectors; a saying of the late great dealer Sidney Janis has been much quoted recently: Scratch a collector and you find a dealer. But Berri is a passionate collector, and an unusual one. "Claude is probably the subtlest collector I have come across in my whole life," Castelli told me. In a time when major collections have begun to resemble one another like so many Benetton outlets, Berri's collection is different. Unalike as the works may be, they share a sensibility, an intensity of feeling.

And there's something else. After the Second World War, New York famously toppled Paris as the world's art capital. Relations between the two art worlds have been bitter ever since. American artists, for instance, were hostile to Yves Klein, whom many regarded as a charlatan, when he came to New York shortly before his death. "Americans don't like French art," Leo Castelli says. "They think it is precious. Too refined."

Claude Berri's collection shows American, French, and other European artists on an equal footing, a very timely thing to do. "It is because it is such a young collection," says the Parisian artist Jean-Pierre Raynaud. "He knows this history. But it does not matter to him."

Berri finished showing me around his collection, shoving a bolt of striped material by Daniel Buren, the French conceptualist, back under a table. We repaired to the kitchen, and he lit a cigarette. "I cannot smoke in there," he said, gesturing toward the main room. Why? "Because of the Rymans."

I asked about the effect of the Great Art Bust of last fall. It has left him unfazed. "The pieces are not for sale," he said. "The market is not my problem. It is not my problem."

We walked downstairs. Berri has leased a disused printworks on the ground floor of the building next to his in the Rue de Lille and transformed it into a small museum, awash with milky natural light. It opened in October with an exhibition of fifty Rymans, five of which Berri owns. The show was installed by the artist himself. Some have caviled that the fledgling museum director has gotten a jump on a major Ryman show being jointly planned by MOMA and London's Tate Gallery. But, then again, why on earth shouldn't he?

Berri's two sons by Anne-Marie are named Julien and Thomas. At twenty, Thomas—who calls himself Langmann rather than Berri—is already a successful actor. Julien is a film director. Berri has been living with Sylvie Gautrelet for eight years. They will marry when he's finished building a house in Provence.

Claude Berri continues to work full-bore at moviemaking. Last year, he appeared as the unappealing title character in *Stan the Flasher,* a movie directed by

Serge Gainsbourg. It was not a success, and Berri told me that his only acting ambition now is a possible return to the stage. He is producing a movie to be directed by Patrice Chéreau, who made *The Wounded Man*. He was to have directed an English-language movie in Hollywood, but abandoned the project. "I was missing too many of the nuances," he says. A Berri production, *L'Amant*, based on Marguerite Duras's international best-seller and directed by Jean-Jacques Annaud, opens in France this month. In September he will start shooting Zola's *Germinal*, starring Gérard Depardieu and Miou-Miou.

I mentioned something that had been on my mind. Berri's tastes in art are rarefied, extreme. His movies, on the other hand, are popular movies, albeit personal, and full of heart. You are no Jean-Luc Godard, I observed.

"That is true," Berri said. "That is true. Perhaps I shall make such a film one day." But movies, he feels, *should* have a wide popular appeal. "Movies are my life," he said. "I love painting. But probably I was born for the movies."

His acquisitive fever seems abated. "I must stop for a little while because I have no money," he told me. He may sell more shares in Renn to Jérôme Seydoux and go off on another splurge, but he isn't certain. "I made a very quick run," he said. "It is not so important for me to collect today. We open the space. I have enough paintings around me to be happy."

Curiously, the stolen Tamara de Lempicka that started the whole thing resurfaced in his life the day before our first meeting in Paris. Two men had gone to jail some time ago for involvement in the theft, but the police were hanging on to the painting until a third suspect was investigated.

One of the jailed men had just been released and sent Berri a postcard. He handed it to me. It carried a sepia scene of Paris life. "I am sorry," the criminal wrote. "I am a painter. I live on Rue Jacob." It contained a succinct critique of one of Berri's movies—and a request for a job.

"Funny, no?" Claude Berri asked. □

Gloria Steinem

(Continued from page 91) has always been apparent that a lot of people—feminists and liberals at least as much as right-wing chauvinists—were waiting to see Steinem fall on her face.

For so many years, even as she was presenting herself as a spokesperson for Everywoman, she seemed impossibly superior: whippet-thin and gorgeous, as glamorous as a movie star while maintaining impeccable credentials as a relentlessly earnest social activist, free of the burdens of domesticity but perpetually surrounded by brilliant, powerful men who doted on her—and she didn't have to wash their socks or clean up a nightly mountain of dinner dishes. Her very existence was enough to make other women feel inadequate. Would she ever repent her refusal to marry, regret her decision not to have children, end up old and alone in belated penance for a lifetime of thumbing her nose at other people's most cherished conventions? Would the paragon finally get her comeuppance? When the facts of Steinem's life have failed to provide such a satisfying dénouement, people have invented them, and the inventions have become as immutable a part of her mythology as anything that ever happened in real life.

By the time Steinem hit her early fifties, however, some genuine problems had begun to surface, converging like so many express trains hurtling toward a collision: the frustration of her failure to produce a real book; the lifelong pattern of hopping from one man to another, which finally led her into a major romantic debacle; the critical lack of self-esteem, so carefully papered over for so long; and finally the shadow that stalks us all, manifesting itself this time as breast cancer. And as the crisis swelled to its climax, the ever present Greek chorus keened its "I-told-you-so"s with obscene glee.

Nobody seems to know for sure how it all began. Perhaps it was an inevitable corollary to Steinem's much-gossiped-about decision to get involved with Mort Zuckerman in the first place. Many of her friends were appalled; even then, back in the mid-eighties, the controversial real-estate developer was hardly beloved in liberal and feminist circles, and he has become less popular since. Zuckerman had only recently moved from Boston to New York, and cynical observers speculated that his sudden passion for Gloria Steinem had as much to do with her enviable social cachet and universal entrée as it did with a deeply felt commitment to her. But any dismay over Steinem's new romance was eclipsed by the fire storm of criticism that erupted when The Rumor That Ate New York burst onto the scene. Suddenly you couldn't go to a dinner party without hearing it: that the unattainable Gloria Steinem, the woman whose previous admirers had ranged from Mike Nichols to John Kenneth Galbraith, who had left an endless trail of disappointed suitors in her wake, the rich and the powerful and the famous littering her path like so much debris—that glorious Gloria had fallen at last, and not only fallen but humiliated herself, betraying the women's movement in the bargain.

Specifically, The Rumor held that Zuckerman, a perennial bachelor who never quite seems to make it to the altar, had promised he'd marry her if she could have his child, and that Steinem, already past fifty, was ricocheting from one fertility specialist to another in a desperate last-ditch attempt to land Mr. Moneybags. The Rumor was astonishing in its virulence, its pervasiveness, and the total certitude with which so many people instantly embraced it; everyone claimed they knew it was true because a friend of a friend had seen Gloria in some doctor's office. As it happened, the doctors Steinem was seeing during that period were cancer specialists, but no matter. The fact that she had spent her entire adult life politely responding to unending questions by saying she wasn't interested in getting married or in having children meant nothing. Trashing her became the favorite spectator sport of the smart set. For all those who had long hoped that Saint Gloria would turn out to be guilty of the hypocrisy and venality they had always suspected but never been able to prove, that period provided an undreamed-of bonanza; so much venom spewed forth on the island of Manhattan it's a wonder it didn't poison the water supply. By the time the talk died down, The Rumor had been accepted as historical fact by all but a few of her closest friends, and to question it publicly meant being dismissed as a foolish and naïve idealist who simply didn't know the score.

Typically, Steinem is philosophical in analyzing the reasons it happened, and her emotional reaction seems restrained. "It hurt my feelings," she acknowledges mildly. "It made it seem like I would suddenly want to do something I had shown no evidence in my life of wanting to do, just because of what some man wanted me to do." When I press her about whether she

has ever sought out fertility specialists, she says firmly, "Absolutely, unequivocally not. I have never gone to a fertility doctor in my life." So why did The Rumor assume such proportions? In part, Steinem sees it as a function of Zuckerman's own reputation. "He has spent all of his adult life going around saying he wants to have a child, so whoever he goes out with is subject to this rumor," she says dryly. "What is hurtful about it is the assumption that women are so without their own power that they will do anything to marry a powerful man. I mean, I never even moved in with him, which was a bone of contention. Even at my lowest point, which was pretty tired and depressed, I didn't want to get married."

Steinem also points out the extent to which people's perceptions reflected the presumption of the female's lack of power in *any* equation. "If you see a man and a woman together whom you know disagree, the assumption is she's losing," Steinem says. "Well, maybe she's winning, or subverting, or spying, or humanizing!" Or trying to, anyway.

There are those who believe that Zuckerman himself may inadvertently have started The Rumor. Mutual acquaintances remember his talking hopefully about the possibility that Gloria might have his child. If he got the wrong idea, Steinem herself takes part of the blame. "I never had the nerve to look him in the eye and say, 'Even if I could do this, I wouldn't, so forget it, it's out of the question,' " she admits.

Zuckerman goes ballistic when asked about the whole subject. "I don't want to get into any discussion on any level," he says angrily. However, asked about whether Gloria ever saw fertility doctors because he had held out a promise of marriage, he does say, "Both parts of that are completely false. It's totally untrue." His current line on Gloria is eulogistic: "She's a wonderful woman. She may be the most brilliant person I've ever known in my life, one of the wittiest and one of the most dedicated to her values and beliefs, a fabulous woman who has given her whole life over to her principles and ideals. I have the most enormous admiration for her." Later, Gloria reports that after his conversation with me, Zuckerman immediately telephoned her "to gloat" over the idea that anyone might believe she had wanted to marry him. To her mind, they are no longer friendly; indeed, she generally looks as if she smelled something putrid whenever his name arises, although she tries to be diplomatic. "In a real sense, we were never friends, so we're not friends now," she says carefully. "It isn't that we dislike each other, but we don't have anything in common."

In *Revolution from Within*, Steinem actually takes on the Mort Question, although she doesn't identify him by name; while the tone of her account is neither defensive nor self-justifying, she clearly felt the need to address why she had fallen in love with "someone so obviously wrong for me," a judgment she illustrates with a slyly telling series of contrasts between his values and her own. Steinem attributes much of her initial attraction to Zuckerman to her particular vulnerability during that period, a time of "exhaustion and living on the edge," of "falling off the treadmill into bed only to get back on it the next day." When she arrived in New York at the airport late one night to find that her eager new swain had sent a car to pick her up, she writes, "its shelter loomed out of all proportion." Moreover, Zuckerman professed to be miserable with his life, thereby activating her Florence Nightingale instincts, not to mention the thought of how much happier he would be if he dedicated his resources to the causes she championed so passionately.

"So I reverted to a primordial skill that I hadn't used since feminism had helped me to make my own life: getting a man to fall in love with me," she reports. "As many women can testify, this is alarmingly easy providing you're willing to play down who you are and play up who he wants you to be. In this case, I was aided by my travel and his work and social schedule that left us with little time to find out how very different we were. And also by something I didn't want to admit: a burn-out and an erosion of self so deep that outcroppings of a scared sixteen-year-old had begun to show through. . . . I had lost so much energy and hope that I was reexperiencing romantic rescue fantasies that had been forgotten long ago. The only problem was that, having got this man to fall in love with an inauthentic me, I had to keep on not being myself." It took her a long time to acknowledge that the situation was impossible, although she and Zuckerman give different accounts of how long they were involved: she says two years, he says four.

Zuckerman's money was the source of the other charge frequently leveled against her during that period—that after thirty years of turning down an endless parade of successful men, Steinem had suddenly metamorphosed into a gold digger. She doesn't deny that his financial assets were part of the appeal, although she was often embarrassed by his ostentatiousness. "I devoted most of my time to trying to get him to drive a van instead of a limousine," she says wryly. Perhaps so, although it often seemed to others that she was enjoying the helicopters and the servants and the assorted other perks of the super-rich. "It wasn't the money per se," she explains, "and it wasn't so much for myself as the idea that he could help the multitudes of causes that need that money—and possibly the magazine, although it was much harder for me to ask for something that was so closely associated with me." And did Zuckerman help *Ms.* magazine, which Steinem spent sixteen years trying desperately to keep alive before it was finally sold in 1987? "No," she says sourly. Nevertheless, the thought that "he could do a great deal of good with his power" remained tantalizing until the bitter end. And the end was bitter, at least for her, although Zuckerman seems to hang on to rosier memories; indeed, he still has a picture of Gloria in his bedroom, where all the other pictures are of himself. "In a way, I guess I was feeling as if, if I could change him, I could change the whole patriarchy," she says sadly.

The sun is not yet up on a dark November morning when a slight figure hurries out of her apartment to hail a taxi to the airport. Within the next few hours, many of her Upper East Side neighbors will be heading out for a leisurely Saturday brunch and a day of recreation, but Gloria Steinem has to catch a 6:45 A.M. flight to Saskatchewan to speak to a women's network about international feminism. Even now, with sixty in sight, her magazine in other hands, and the entire culture conspiring to convince women that the women's movement is dead, Steinem's commitment to changing the patriarchy shows no sign whatsoever of flagging.

She isn't even discouraged. Yes, the Clarence Thomas hearings were depressing, but sexual harassment didn't even exist as a defined problem until the last few years. "Sexual harassment is where rape was as an issue fifteen years ago," Steinem says confidently, "and sexual-harassment complaints are up 500 percent since the hearings." And besides, the reaction to the hearings has been extraordinary. "I've never seen anything like the outpouring of anger," she exclaims. "People come up to you in airports; they say, 'What can we do—it's so terrible! Why didn't anyone believe Anita

Hill? We've got to get rid of these guys in Congress!' "

Indeed, Gloria Steinem is the last person you could convince that the women's movement was dead. "Ever since the movement began, it's been being declared dead," she says. "The first headline to that effect was in 1969, and there have been multitudes forever after. The backlash is there, and it may succeed, but it is because the movement is strong that there *is* a backlash. There used to be an identifiable band of twelve feminists, so the media knew where to go. Now it's everywhere—inside the Modern Language Association, the American Psychiatric Association, in caucuses in the Newspaper Guild.

"This is a democracy, so there's an assumption that Reagan or Bush represents the country. But if you look at the polls, the issues Reagan and Bush stand for are not the majority issues. If you measure things in the only way this country seems to provide us to measure, which is public-opinion polls, there's been a fairly steady growth in support for feminist issues, although that goes contrary to popular wisdom. One of the things I find so frustrating is the fact that you turn on the television set and nine-tenths of the national news is about so-called women's issues. There's battered children, domestic violence, sexual harassment, rape, sexual abuse of children, Teddy Kennedy and his apology in Cambridge, the critique of the Senate and its unresponsive nature, the defection of major contributors from the Republican Party, the fact that health and pro-choice issues provided the margin of victory for Harris Wofford's Senate race against Dick Thornburgh in Pennsylvania—but none of it is associated with the women's movement. The women's movement is alive and well; it's just not being called the women's movement." She sighs. "It's not conscious; it's beyond conspiracy. It's a definitional problem, a cultural drift, two-thirds of which is underwater. But it's very dangerous. I keep thinking of the sentence in college textbooks about how women were 'given' the vote, a phrase which ignored 150 years of struggle and hunger strikes. The changes are there, but unless we know how the changes got made, we won't know how to continue."

And so Gloria Steinem never stops talking about how the changes get made. She may have come late to feminism, but once she finally got the picture, she never lost sight of it again. She is the first to admit she was slow to catch on. "Until I was into my thirties I was stoutly maintaining I had not been discriminated against," she says with regret. "There was a well of anger so deep I just did not want to talk about it. I had difficulty renting an apartment, because if I was a single woman I wasn't financially reliable and if I was financially reliable I must be a call girl. I was having an almost impossible time getting serious journalistic assignments. I was certainly dealing with what we now call sexual harassment—but it was all so bad I just displaced it. I identified with every other group that was being discriminated against—the farm workers, the civil-rights movement—rather than other women in my situation."

And when she did finally jump on the bandwagon, she immediately became a target. After all, in those days Steinem was best known professionally for having worked as a Playboy Bunny and then written about it, and her personal reputation was that of the femme fatale every man in New York seemed to be in love with—"the intellectuals' pinup," as *Esquire* magazine called her in a snide 1971 profile, the woman "who advanced in public favor by appealing to powerful men." Her sudden emergence as a spokesperson for the women's movement proved especially galling to its putative author, Betty Friedan—particularly because, as Muriel Fox recalled in *The Sisterhood*, Marcia Cohen's history of the movement, "the minute Gloria came on the scene, the media dropped Betty like a hot potato." The fallout was ugly: by 1972, Friedan was denouncing Gloria for "ripping off the movement for private profit," by which she apparently meant fame rather than money, since Steinem donated at least 50 percent of her speaking fees to women's causes or to *Ms.* magazine, something Friedan didn't do, according to *The Sisterhood*. Steinem had never been part of the organized women's movement, Friedan claimed angrily: "The media tried to make her a celebrity, but no one should mistake her for a leader."

> "Gloria is sort of like the *Mona Lisa*, and the *Mona Lisa* is a really infuriating portrait," Liz Smith observes.

Other feminists cringed at the public discord, and even those who were loath to take sides were dismayed by the malignancy of the attacks on Steinem. "It is probably too easy to go on about the two of them this way—Betty as Wicked Witch of the West, Gloria as Ozma, Glinda, Dorothy—take your pick," Nora Ephron wrote in *Esquire*. "To talk this way ignores the subtleties, right? Gloria is not, after all, uninterested in power. . . . Still, it is hard to come out anywhere but squarely on her side. Betty Friedan, in her thoroughly irrational hatred of Steinem, has ceased caring whether or not the effects of that hatred are good or bad for the women's movement." Upset by such characterizations, Friedan vehemently denied "that I was jealous of Gloria because she was blonde and pretty and I was not," but she could never resist getting in another dig. "I was no match for her, not only because of that matter of looks—which somehow paralyzed me—but because I don't know how to manipulate," Friedan wrote piously.

Among those who knew her well, Steinem's conversion to feminism came as no surprise at all. "She'd always been very politically concerned; a sense of justice and a clear political stance had always been very central to her," says Robert Benton, the film director, who dated Steinem in the early 1960s. "She'd been very involved in civil rights, and the women's movement is another form of civil rights, so it was perfectly consistent. But because Gloria has always been extraordinarily glamorous, I think people were surprised that somebody like that would be a feminist, because everyone misunderstood feminism then."

But there was more to it than that. On some level, Gloria has always made other people feel guilty for being manifestly less perfect themselves; her very existence constitutes a reproach. "If I told her about a disastrous love affair, she told me about the cultural and social strains that had broken it up," Liz Smith complained humorously in 1971. "It's like getting a message from Gandhi. . . . Gloria has all the irritating qualities of a saint—she is a rebuke." Twenty years later, Smith's perception hasn't changed. "Gloria is sort of like the *Mona Lisa*, and the *Mona Lisa* is a really infuriating portrait," Smith ob-

serves. "That enigmatic little smile, that perfection! I think most of us perceive that Gloria is a better person than we are, and as I said back then, saints are really irritating. She is a really good person who just has not lived up to everyone else's venal ideals. She's true to herself, but she's ended up absolutely nowhere. She hasn't really done anything for herself, not even in what I consider would have been her own best interest. She's never taken advantage of anything, she has remained in that same little apartment, she doesn't have cars—how much of an opportunist ends up with virtually nothing?"

Steinem's unfailing political correctness irked people as well. She has always maintained that *Ms.* magazine had a hard time because advertisers wouldn't support it; as usual, patriarchy was the problem. Even among other feminists, this didn't necessarily seem to be the whole story. "Why did *Ms.* fail?" says one prominent female journalist who wrote for the magazine. "Because they had a hideously boring magazine no one could read. That's why it was not successful—it was a goddamn bore."

Of course, Steinem's looks alone were more than enough reason for jealousy, the underlying cause of much of the sniping over the years. And because she presented herself in a sexy way, other women often acted as if she must be insincere. The fact that her desirability conferred obvious privileges only exacerbated their suspicions of hypocrisy. "The thing I find most irritating about her is that I think she doesn't tell the truth," says one former editor. "When she says, 'A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle,' it's a great quote, but I don't think you get to say it if you never in your life spent twenty minutes without a man."

Not that Steinem ever conformed to conventional expectations about what you were supposed to do with a man once you got him. "She had all these guys, some of them really wonderful, and she didn't marry any of them—unforgivable!" Smith says. "She didn't have any children—unforgivable! She dared to be in love with Mort Zuckerman and not marry him! I think he was really in love with her and would have married her. But what she did was impale her conscience over it, because she was in love with him and didn't want to be. She would say to me, 'Have you ever been in love with somebody who was totally inappropriate?' I said, 'I've never been in love with any other kind! Relax and enjoy it!' If I had been Gloria, I would have married him in a minute and used his money to accomplish my ends, but she didn't really approve of him. People think any woman would do anything to marry a rich guy, but she didn't want to marry him."

Steinem didn't make her detractors feel any better with remarks such as her much-quoted crack that she couldn't "mate in captivity," an image that made more conventional types feel rather like monkeys in depressing little cages. "People would like to believe she has some regret for making those choices, because otherwise maybe they should have made those choices," says Letty Pogrebin. "She doesn't seem to have suffered for them, and they would like to believe she *has* suffered for them, because otherwise they have to question their own lives."

Steinem didn't make her detractors feel any better with her much-quoted crack that she couldn't "mate in captivity."

But the most important reason Steinem never wanted to be a parent has always been clear to her intimates. "I think she's already had a child, and it was her mother, and therefore I don't believe she has an interest in doing it again," says Stan Pottinger, who was an assistant attorney general in the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department when he and Steinem first got involved in the 1970s. "If she's ever had more than a passing regret, I've never seen it. I don't believe it's there, and if it is, it's so deeply suppressed that it's not an issue for her."

Steinem's mother was "an invalid who lay in bed with eyes closed and lips moving in occasional response to voices only she could hear; a woman to whom I brought an endless stream of toast and coffee, bologna sandwiches and dime pies, in a child's version of what meals should be," as Steinem would later write in her collection of essays, *Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions*. Her mother had been a journalist who loved her newspaper career, but she gave it up after she married and had children, and from then on she struggled with the nervous breakdowns, the terrible hallucinations, the dependence on the knockout drops her doctor supplied, the fear of leaving her own house. Eventually her husband, a charming but feckless man who prided himself on never wearing a hat and never working for somebody else, couldn't take it anymore and moved to California, leaving ten-year-old Gloria to cope alone. Abandoned by her adored father and unassisted on a day-to-day basis by her sister, who was many years older and off on her own, the little girl retreated into a world of books, fantasizing that she had been adopted and that her real parents would someday find her. Eventually she escaped to Smith College, a triumph made possible when her mother managed to sell their deteriorating farmhouse, whose broken-down furnace had already been condemned by the health department; the house was bought for demolition by the church next door.

It scarcely seems surprising that such a child might grow up with a self-esteem problem, but the mere sight of Gloria always made it so hard to believe. She has often referred to her self-image as a "fat brunette from Toledo," but that vision seemed so preposterous to other people that they assumed she was being disingenuous. To Steinem, however, whose father weighed three hundred pounds and whose sister was also obese, the vision was all too real. It dictated her hairstyle—"I was always hiding behind my hair because I thought I had a fat face," she says apologetically—and her eating habits, which have always been bizarre. Steinem describes herself as a compulsive "foodaholic"; her friends say she isn't exaggerating. "There was never anything in her refrigerator, because she was afraid she would eat it," explains Suzanne Levine. "I've seen her around a jar of chocolate cookies, and she just can't stop. At *Ms.* she'd be in the office late at night and she'd go on a binge; she'd raid all the desks, and you'd come in the next morning to find these lovely little notes: 'I took your Tootsie Roll,' 'I took your Cheez Whiz,' 'I'll replace it,' 'I'm so sorry . . .' "

"She would sit down and say she didn't want any, and then she would eat it all,"

says Letty Pogrebin. "As time went on, I began to see that she's a person who's always on the brink of eating it all. She's got a finger in the dike—that's why she's thin—but let it out and she's instantly overwhelmed. You can't be not parented the way she was not parented and not do something with that pain. A lot of her placidity and peacefulness is papered-over pain, I'm sure—but that is not something she could have acknowledged or discussed until recently."

Ever since Steinem's cancer scare several years ago (she had a lumpectomy and has been fine ever since), she has been working on improving both the inner and the outer manifestations of her delinquent self-image. She eats differently, opting for grains instead of bologna sandwiches; she exercises; she stays home more. She still streaks her hair lightly, but the blatant stripes of an earlier era are gone. "I thought of them as rebellious," she explains. "It was just a way of saying, 'Fuck you.' Brunette ladies did not streak their hair with obvious streaks in those days, and the whole point was not to be a lady. But I'm thinking of stopping altogether." She grins. "As Alice Walker says, 'Oppressed hair puts a ceiling on the brain.' "

And the last thing Steinem wants to do anymore is put a ceiling on her brain; she's got too much to do for that. Now that *Ms.* is a reader-supported magazine owned by Lang Communications, Steinem no longer has to spend her time peddling advertising; she is a consulting editor who comes and goes as she pleases, secure in the knowledge that the magazine's future doesn't depend on her. And having written her book at long last, perhaps the logjam is broken and others will stream forth. Certainly she has the energy, and the faith. "Women are lucky, in a way," she says earnestly. "We have a hope, a dream of greater justice, of what society could look like. To have a vision—we all need that. I see little miracles women perform in their everyday lives, sometimes opposed by their own families, sometimes ridiculed by their own husbands, and somehow they do it anyway. It's the cleaning woman in the airport who sees me sleeping on a bench where they've put all these armrests so you can't lie down, and she says, 'Honey, there's a broom closet over there where I sleep when the foreman isn't looking,' and who then tells me about how her husband beat her up for so many years and how she finally wouldn't put up with it anymore, and now she has this job—and that's a miracle. I think to myself, If this was all I lived to see, this would be enough. How many people have in their lives, and in their work, a number of things that make them feel, 'If I only did that!'? I realize people have that about their children, but a lot of us were motherless, because our mothers didn't have the power to protect us, so the movement is partly about being mothers to each other."

We are sitting in her living room, I on a cheerful yellow chintz armchair, she on the plush green velvet sofa; it is dusk, and the streetlights have begun to glow outside the soaring front windows. For twenty years Steinem slept on a platform loft in one corner of this room, so she could use the back of her two-room apartment as an office, but when she got the $700,000 book advance for *Revolution from Within* she bought two rooms downstairs and connected them with a spiral staircase. (The first two rooms cost her $23,000 in 1977; ten years later, the second two cost her $323,000.) Steinem jokes that she used her first book advance to buy the additional rooms, and the $500,000 advance for the next book she's agreed to write to pay the taxes on the first advance, but after a lifetime of financial precariousness there is enough of a margin that she has even established a belated pension fund for herself. And she finally has a big canopied bed irresistibly dressed in mountains of pristine white lace, a little girl's dream of a bed, a magical haven where nothing bad could ever happen to you and all your dreams would be wonderful. "It's so satisfying to feel as though I have a home!" she says. "And even when I'm by myself, I'm as real as I am when I'm being useful, or when there are other people around." There is a sardonic grin on her face. "And I occasionally ask myself the revolutionary question 'What do you want to do?' as opposed to what needs doing, what other people want me to do, or what I'm expected to do!" She sighs ruefully. "That may not sound like much, but for me it's a pretty big change."

Friends are waiting at an old-fashioned French restaurant to have dinner with her, but later on tonight Steinem will come home alone; there is no beau these days. "For the first time in my life," she says, bemused at the thought. "If I say it feels wonderful, I don't mean that I wasn't happy being involved. It feels wonderful in a different way. I suppose I'm doing something now that I should have done at sixteen."

And what will her future hold? She smiles. "I feel as if now I know what I want to say, I should begin it," she says. □

Ann Humphry

(Continued from page 86) the Koomans, were ailing, and had joined the Hemlock Society. Arthur, ninety-two, suffered from congestive heart failure; Elizabeth, eighty, had never fully recovered from a stroke. They told their daughter they wished to die with dignity.

Derek and Ann Humphry flew to Boston to help them. Later, in her book *Double Exit*, "fictionalized" to avoid criminal charges by the Massachusetts authorities, Ann described in painful detail how she and Derek took the phone off the hook, double-locked all the doors, and fed a gruel of applesauce, ice cream, 7UP, and Vesparax to the elderly couple.

Ann's last words to her mother were: "Remember when I was a little girl and sick and hated my medicine, and you made me take it in a hurry?" Derek told me, "She helped her mother to die and I helped her father to die. . . . I was very fond of her father, and got on with him awfully well, so I sat with him and he was holding my hand as he died. He said, 'Good-bye, Derek,' and I said, 'Good-bye, Arthur.' "

With her $300,000 inheritance, Ann purchased the farm in Monroe, naming it, without ironic intent, Windfall. But it brought her little peace of mind. "I don't know if that's something anyone can get over," Urbanski says. Nancy Raymo agrees: "I think it just ate her up. We had a fairly religious upbringing, and it is one thing to be writing about death, and another when it comes so close to home. For Derek it was his usual, but for Ann it was not. Derek was not able to connect with the fact that she was having an emotional struggle. Some men *can* be an emotional support, but this one couldn't."

Indeed, a fateful crack appeared in their partnership as Ann began to question the integrity of what they had done. All her life her relationship with her parents had been strained, and now she had, however gently, disposed of them. She became a prisoner of that furtive act, doomed to replay it over and over again in her head. But while Ann was trapped in guilt and self-doubt over the Koomans' deaths,

their orchestrated demise appeared only to build Derek's confidence in his mission. Perhaps it comforted him to think that his parents-in-law had followed the same course as Jean; perhaps their decision served as a kind of absolution of his own actions. One thing is certain: he was impatient with his wife's protracted grief. The warning signs were there. He could move on; she could not. Humphry later told me he had "tried to make it up to her" at one point with sex. "I did make love to her, but she wouldn't make love to me. It was just like masturbating in her vagina. She's not a good sexual lover."

Humphry's irritation at his wife was possibly exacerbated by the blows that struck his own family at around the same time. One of his three sons was jailed in England on a drug charge. Then his brother, Garth, a car dealer near Bristol, suffered irreparable brain damage during a minor operation as the result of a medical accident. Humphry flew to England for a family consultation about Garth's vegetative state, and instructed the doctors to turn off the life-support machine.

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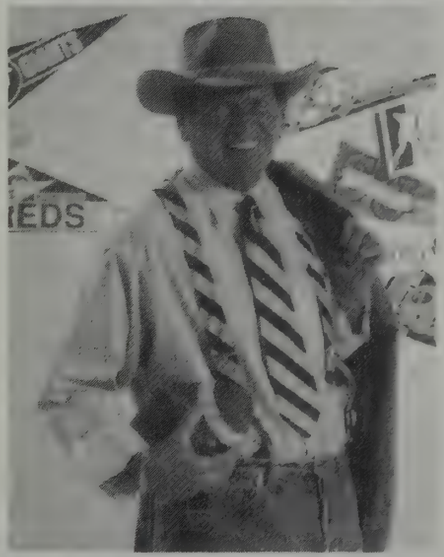

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"I think Derek doesn't cope with dying on a personal level," Ann told me. "He just went to pieces when his brother died and was very, very resentful of mortality. And when my parents died he just didn't want to know—he was terribly angry, angry at me, probably because he thought I wasn't there for him. . . . He did say, after my parents had been dead for seven weeks, 'I never want to hear any mention of your parents again. . . . I'm sick and tired of hearing about them.' " Ann added that she had asked Derek, " 'Why is it that my parents, who died the way they did . . . you forbid me to speak of them ever again? When Jean died, I spent two years nursing you through your grieving, wrote a book with you about Jean, and Jean's been a part of our lives for eleven years.' . . . He said, 'Well, we made a business out of Jean's dying. That's different.' "

It was to be Derek, however, who brought up the Koomans' deaths again. In response to Ann's public outrage about his lack of compassion after he left her, and his handling of Hemlock's financial affairs, he put another message on the answering machine: "If you continue this stupid fighting one step more, I shall give your sister and nieces a full statement that you've committed a crime in helping your parents to die. They will then be able to sue you for the $300,000 you inherited. You must know that in law you cannot benefit from the result of a crime. Just live quietly, regain your health, agree to a divorce where we keep our own property, and let's get on with our lives. Otherwise I fly to Boston. I'm in deadly earnest. Think it over. Bye."

It was a message not calculated to alleviate his wife's grief, a message of which Humphry later told me he was "ashamed." But it achieved its immediate purpose, persuading Ann to cease her invective. Or at least to bide her time, for on the morning of her death she put into play an astonishing counterattack. In addition to tidying her house and feeding her animals, she sat down at her typewriter and composed a note—since highly publicized—to Derek Humphry. The note said:

Derek:

There. You got what you wanted. Ever since I was diagnosed as having cancer, you have done everything conceivable to precipitate my death.

I was not alone in recognizing what you were doing. What you did—desertion and abandonment and subsequent harassment of a dying woman—is so unspeakable there are no words to describe the horror of it.

Yet you know. And others know too. You will have to live with this until you die.

May you never, ever forget.

She signed the note "Ann" with a ballpoint pen. An examination of the signature suggests that her hand trembled.

She made a copy of the note and under the typed text composed a short message to Rita Marker, the anti-euthanasia activist, who had become a close friend. It read, "Rita: My final words to Derek. He is a killer. *I know*. Jean actually died of suffocation. I could never say it until now; who would believe me? Do the best you can."

In *Jean's Way*, Humphry refers to the fact that, after giving his first wife the lethal drink, he stood ready to place a pillow over her face in the event of a prolonged death. He records that he did not have to use the pillow. But Ann later claimed that Derek had covered Jean's face with it and smothered her.

There is no evidence to support Ann Humphry's version, and so its truthfulness cannot be tested—other than by putting it to Humphry himself. He declined to be interviewed by me for this article, but told a reporter from *Inside Edition* that the charge "is a totally false accusation made by a disturbed woman. It's not true . . . and it's the sad story of an unhappy and disturbed and angry woman making wild accusations."

Although these "wild accusations" from the grave are taunting, it is unlikely that they will do any lasting harm to Derek Humphry's image. It is difficult to dismiss his vigorous and repeated denials. And, further, one may question if—for a person already committed to the end result—there is any real difference between delivering a lethal dose of poison and stopping the flow of oxygen. Still, Ann's friends have mounted an anti-Humphry campaign, spurred on by the note to Rita Marker ("Do the best you can") and by a videotape of a conversation between Ann and Julie Horvath made the day before her death. In it, Ann says Derek once admitted to her that "there was some sort of choking and regurgitation" as Jean expired and that he had "suffocated" her. "Derek had always said to me, 'Just use a plastic bag or a pillow.' " She reveals for the first time that she held a plastic bag over her mother's mouth at the end. "But I walked away from that house thinking, We're both murderers."

In the end Ann, who after the divorce

slept with a .22 beside her bed for security, needed bodily protection only from herself. And Derek, once again, was left to explain to the world what had happened.

"It's extremely painful to have lost two wives," he recently told a reporter, with his customary stoicism. "It's like a Greek tragedy."

Whatever else remains unknown—and unknowable—that, at least, is the absolute truth. □

Manic Zanuck

(Continued from page 108) You can't have heard as many people say, 'What I really want to do is direct,' as many years as I have and not be embarrassed. After all, when you say it aloud, the joke's on you.

"It's like 'Who does she think she is? Couldn't she leave well enough alone? Couldn't she ride on her success and produce a movie?' You can hear that kind of garbage. And that garbage crippled me. When I first started producing, I had nothing to lose. But after *Daisy*—this was the first time in my life I had something to lose."

So she resisted telling anyone. Then one day the Zanucks were driving back from a meeting together, and "Dick said, 'The *Rush* script will be here in a couple of days and you should get a list of directors together,' " Lili recalls, somewhat gleefully. "I said, 'I have an idea.' He said, 'Who?' And I said, 'Me.' We were just approaching my car and I got out because I didn't want to hear him say we had just spent a million dollars and on and on. But when I got home Dick said, 'That's a very good idea.' "

It was now *their* secret—they didn't even tell Jerry Perenchio, their business partner. "We kept it between us for a number of reasons," says Zanuck. "Lili was a woman, Lili was a wife, and I was nervous—we had a lot of money invested in the project and I knew a well-known director would make it easier to set up."

The Zanucks still didn't have a male lead in mind. "Then one Sunday," Lili recalls, "Dick and I went to the AMC in Century City to see a movie, and it was sold out. Victoria Principal and her husband, Dr. Harry Glassman, were coming out of the theater, and they said, 'You should go see *After Dark, My Sweet*, with Jason Patric. He's the greatest thing you've ever seen.' We went and there weren't two seats together, and I'm watching this movie, thinking, This guy's Raynor. And then I'm walking up the aisle and Dick goes, 'That's Raynor.' "

They called Patric's agent, David Schiff, and set up a meeting. Patric, who has recently gained tabloid fame as the object of Julia Roberts's affections, came and stared at the floor and did not speak. At a second meeting, he was more voluble and, expressing interest in the role, wanted to know who the director was. "I told him, 'It's somebody in this room and it's not me and it's not you,' " says Zanuck, who added, " 'You're going to think that I'm just a husband who's trying to get his wife a job, but I'm not.' Jason was stunned. He felt betrayed." Patric turned them down.

"He was shocked," says Schiff. "And we were surprised." Patric's resistance to Lili neatly mirrored the response of the town: "Think about it," says one agent. "Dick paid a million dollars so his wife could direct—who else would make that deal? First there was Robert Towne and Tom Cruise; now it's Lili Zanuck and a bunch of unknowns? For those who want to exploit vulnerability, and God knows that's most people in Hollywood, this was a wide-open one."

But Lili wanted Patric. "We told him, 'The part is yours. You've said no, we haven't.' " Eventually, "after hours upon hours and days upon days," according to his agent, Patric came around. (It was a smart move: he is terrific in the film—edgy and tortured and, finally, very moving.) Once again, Lili's persistence paid off—she got her man.

With two little-known leads, a first-time director, and a projected budget of $17 million, the Zanucks went looking for a studio. Warner Bros. said no, too dark. Paramount said no, too expensive *and* too dark. Then, at MGM, Alan Ladd Jr. said yes. The Zanuck Company subsequently signed an overall distribution deal with MGM-Pathe. "With *Rush*, I never really got discouraged," Lili says now. "A long time ago, I learned not to personalize these things."

Lili is cross. She plops down on the couch in the back of the studio where *Rush*'s sound is being corrected, and stares for a moment, collecting her thoughts. "On the way over here, an interviewer called me in the car," she says

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Manic Zanuck

finally. "She asked me how *Dick and I* directed the movie."

Lili looks up at the blank screen. Her resolve—her stubborn refusal to listen to Hollywood naysayers and skeptics—is cracking. Since the first dailies began arriving from Houston, *Rush* has been the subject of much interest—and sniping. "First you heard the movie was great," says one agent. "In the beginning, everyone is always nice—Jason is great, Jennifer is great, and Lili is doing a terrific job. But there's too much jealousy for that to last, and, besides, Lili is a woman and a wife. So then you heard people saying, 'Well, the movie's great because she had a good crew, a great director of photography'—the conventional wisdom being that a chimp could direct a great film with a great D.P. In Hollywood, people love to believe the worst."

"Since the movie is good, they credit the crew," says Tracey Jacobs, Lili's agent. "But if the movie was bad, they would blame Lili. If you're a woman in Hollywood, you're damned if you do and damned if you don't."

"I've heard all that," says Lili, sounding unusually exasperated and angry. "First, Dick was dragging his armpiece along with him, and now I'm this femme fatale. I went from being a bimbo to Medusa." She smiles grimly at the image. "What do they think—that I somehow coerced Dick into letting me direct? That I put something in his tea? And now if I work with another producer, people will say I was just using him to get ahead. Think about it—if you get a promotion, does that mean your relationship is over?"

Rush starts to roll. The credits come up against a long Orson Welles–ian shot that follows the main villain, played by Gregg Allman, through his honky-tonk bar. "You know," Lili whispers, "I opted not to call this 'A Lili Fini Zanuck Film.' I thought that was pretentious." She gets up to join her guys at the board. "Now, with all that's happening, maybe I should have."

The Zanuck Company offices are in Beverly Hills, on the ground floor of a small office building. Lili's office is down a longish hall and to the right, while her husband's office is at the other end. They often work all day without seeing each other, apprising each other of the day's events over dinner.

It's after lunch on a Monday and Lili has just met with her decorator. She and Dick have almost completed their "dream house," which they are building on four acres, high up above the Beverly Hills Hotel. Lili has been through this process before—she supervised the construction of their home in Sun Valley—but this experience has been a nightmare. "It'll be ready by Christmas," Dick says optimistically. "It'll be ready by Valentine's Day," Lili says with resolve.

They have been building the house for about three years, since shortly after they sold the Santa Monica beach house that Darryl F. Zanuck built. As usual, there was much gossip about Lili's having manipulated her husband to suit her own ends. "It wasn't the ancestral home or anything," she says. "*What do people think*—I was planning it on our honeymoon and just waited eleven years? People sell houses. People move. The kids were grown up and out of there. It was time to leave."

> "With *Rush*, I never really got discouraged," Lili says. "A long time ago, I learned not to personalize these things."

The new house is far from finished. "There's no bedroom," Zanuck notes. "There's no kitchen. But the tennis court is finished. If I made a movie like this, it would be the last one I ever made." This week, Lili and Dick have been living in the guesthouse. "My poor husband," Lili says. "Every day, a hundred guys come pounding."

Not that any of this seems to really bother Lili—she's building the house and so of course it will get done. "She goes out and gets it," says a friend. "In a man, that would be admired. In a woman, it's seen as terrifying."

Today, as with nearly any other day, Lili has too much to do. The holiday season is nearly here and Lili does all the corporate Christmas shopping herself, as well as buying presents for Dick's four children and his six grandchildren. There is press on *Rush* to take care of and then there's packing for a trip back to South Carolina—she has to get some coats and sweaters out of storage. But Lili thrives on pressure. This is, after all, a woman who believes the headaches she gets on Sundays are because she has no work to do, no errands to run: "My doctor told me that during the week I get an adrenal rush to the brain and on Sundays, when I'm not working, my brain misses that rush." Not surprisingly, she's not wild about vacations. "I do well for about three days and then I don't like it," she says earnestly, sitting in a straight-backed chair in her office.

The phone is ringing in the outer office, but Lili's assistant, Danuta Stuart, is holding all calls unless Eric Clapton phones. He did the music for *Rush*, and Lili needs to discuss the video for the movie, which is to be filmed next week in London. "I must have made seventy phone calls to get Eric Clapton for this movie," she says. "I had no second choice. I was so sure he was going to do it, I wouldn't think of a second choice. I think if you start to think about someone else, you're not fighting hard enough for what you really want. You're already starting to get comfortable. You won't stay on your course."

In the end, as seems to happen most of the time with Lili, she realized her dream. Around the office is photographic proof of those triumphs: pictures of Dick running in the surf, Dick and Lili and Jack and Warren the night *Driving Miss Daisy* won best picture, a photo of the cast of *Cocoon*. A pile of thirty-odd scripts is stacked on a coffee table, a testament to the buzz on *Rush*.

"I haven't read anything I like," she says, though it's rumored she is interested in directing *The Remains of the Day*, from the Kazuo Ishiguro novel about an English butler and his loyalty to his former employer, a Nazi sympathizer. Mike Nichols has been slated to direct the movie, but, with Lili on the case, anything is possible.

She stares at the pile of scripts, looking somewhat frustrated. "What people don't realize is that I would chuck the whole motion-picture business tomorrow. But then there would be a problem with what to do with my time." Lili smiles. "You know, we have this house in Sun Valley," she says. "I could always run for mayor." □

Planetarium

CAPRICORN ♑ *December 22–January 19*

Even if 1992 turns out to be more off-the-wall and out-of-control than this past year was, with the help of some goody-goody counselors you can still march right through the holidays with good cheer. Living it up is never easy for you, and this is a season when you're supposed to go on smiling even while you're being forced to dig into your savings. Until December 22, when the sun leaves Sagittarius, you'll just have to continue giving unselfishly. After that, you can abruptly stop shopping. In the meantime, try not to growl at the very thought of being a little bit charitable.

AQUARIUS ♒ *January 20–February 18*

You haven't been keen on socializing since September, when Saturn moved forward in Aquarius, but at the full moon on December 21, bets are on that you'll step out of your shell and do at least eight bars of "Over the Rainbow." There's a mother/father figure in your life right now who can be pretty rough and demanding—supportive of your creativity, protective and oddly nurturing, but a lot like the queen of the nest in the film *Aliens*, especially as Venus approaches Pluto in the days leading up to Christmas. To dilute this intensity, find a good friend to cuddle with—a Virgo would be a harmless choice.

PISCES ♓ *February 19–March 20*

All through December you're back in demand, and the recent damage is behind you. It's not all over for you by a long shot. Certainly by the time Mars hits Jupiter on December 18 you'll actually be motivated again. The world hasn't passed you by after all. You don't have to sit there with your scrapbook, remembering faded greatness. People love you. Then, *boom*, on December 30 Jupiter goes retrograde, and your support will appear to fall away. You'll have to go through a few I'm-a-flop-and-a-has-been moments this winter, but by the end of April, Jupiter will have moved forward, and you're sure to be loved again.

ARIES ♈ *March 21–April 19*

The slow creeping of Pluto through your 8th house since 1984 has not only made you appreciate each precious moment of life and good health but has also changed your mating habits. In addition, it has brought you dangerously close to the edge of a two-lane road that runs along a bottomless drop, with a great big truck marked "I.R.S." headed right at you. No wonder you've been periodically panicked. Raise your eyes to the light now. While Mars transits Sagittarius through January 8, forget the 999 things that could eventually go wrong; just dig your spurs in and ride that horse, laughing straight into the forest.

TAURUS ♉ *April 20–May 20*

With Saturn inching through your 10th house, you've been wondering when certain people will try to shoot you down just because you're ambitious, why you have to defend your position, and what you have to do to keep from being sucked up and squashed by the system. This little predicament will be with you two more years. December, though, is a dramatic month, full of little births, deaths, and passions. You'll feel bewitched and in the grip of an inexorable, magnetic, controlling force as Venus edges toward Pluto right before Christmas. Oddly, though that force is usually connected with money, it is also known as love.

GEMINI ♊ *May 21–June 21*

People are all around you now—Virgos to tidy up your kitchen, Sadges to help you think beyond the next five minutes, and even Scorpios to yank you back into your body. Maybe someone can help you stop avoiding decisions on everything from school to personal commitments to painting the front hall. You haven't given a definite yes to anyone, because you're convinced that everything depends on something else. As a result, you've been disturbingly noncommittal, and none more so than a certain Gemini named Cuomo. As soon as Mercury goes forward on December 18, you should be able to straighten out your head.

CANCER ♋ *June 22–July 22*

The period between the new moon on December 5 and the full moon on the 21st is about health. So try to calm your inner self through meditation, even if you have to grab it in five-minute doses after everyone else is asleep or before they wake up. It may not keep you from going crazy, but it will certainly keep you functioning through the holidays and the weeks following. As for your physical health, stop taking your cues from those cookbooks that claim you can diet and still have plenty of fats and red wine. Contrary to what you'd like to believe, cholesterol doesn't cease to exist just because it's New Year's Eve.

LEO ♌ *July 23–August 22*

There are only so many hours you can devote to listening for the scream of pinched pennies or squatting on the front porch with your eyes peeled for poachers. The new moon on January 6 could get you back in the old clutch, but for now, while the sun and moon and Mars touch Jupiter in your 2nd house, you have to prove to yourself that you still know how to laugh, dance, play poker, and make love once in a while. You are not now, nor ever will be, a Cancer, so it's time you stopped hurting yourself by staring enviously at *The Cosby Show*. How many people really live like that?

VIRGO ♍ *August 23–September 22*

For months now, you've been pumped up with hope and optimism. After December 30, when Jupiter goes retrograde in your sign for four months, the plans for expansion you've been making will seem to dry up. Big big big projects may have to go on the back burner. Things you were fired up about may peter out. Your zeal will flag, and you will find you can no longer go on enabling certain leeches to take, take, and keep taking. If you withdraw support, they may claim you're the rat leaving the ship. So what? By now you must be totally sick of playing the role of Santa Claus.

LIBRA ♎ *September 23–October 23*

Jupiter in Virgo will provide the key to inner peace and the path to liberation throughout all of 1992. When Jupiter is in your 12th house, the arrows of your enemies never quite reach your back. Even if the solid foundation you've been building suddenly develops a giant crack, while Jupiter's in the 12th, no sweat. Hard as it may be for you to imagine, nobody controls you. Stranger still, you don't control other people. Just put it all in the hands of the universe and you won't have a thing to worry about. The trick is to stop trying to manipulate the universe.

SCORPIO ♏ *October 24–November 21*

Venus is in your sign until New Year's, so you'll probably be the sexiest person doing volunteer work this season. Venus in Scorpio means you play the irresistible spider lady or the hunk in black tights at the gym. You'll get the urge to hypnotize a Marine on his first weekend pass or to seduce a cheerleader. You'll embody the force that can take a man away from his wife, or a woman away from her man. You'll be able to wiggle your eyebrows and make a sucker buy anything you have to sell. This is special magnetism. Don't judge it. Don't sell it short. Don't abuse it. Just use it.

SAGITTARIUS ♐ *November 22–December 21*

Jupiter in your 10th house, triggered by the new moon of December 5, is absolutely great for seeing your name in the papers or for getting a cordial response from even the nastiest maître d'. Mars is in Sagittarius until the second week of January, so you're out of the swamp and telling yourself that 1992 will mean a whole new life. You've got enough of your old oomph back to fix up your place and let everybody know that whatever was bugging you is past, provided you don't give in to that annoying little voice that tells you to stay in bed and not even bother to wind your watch.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TIM SHEAFFER

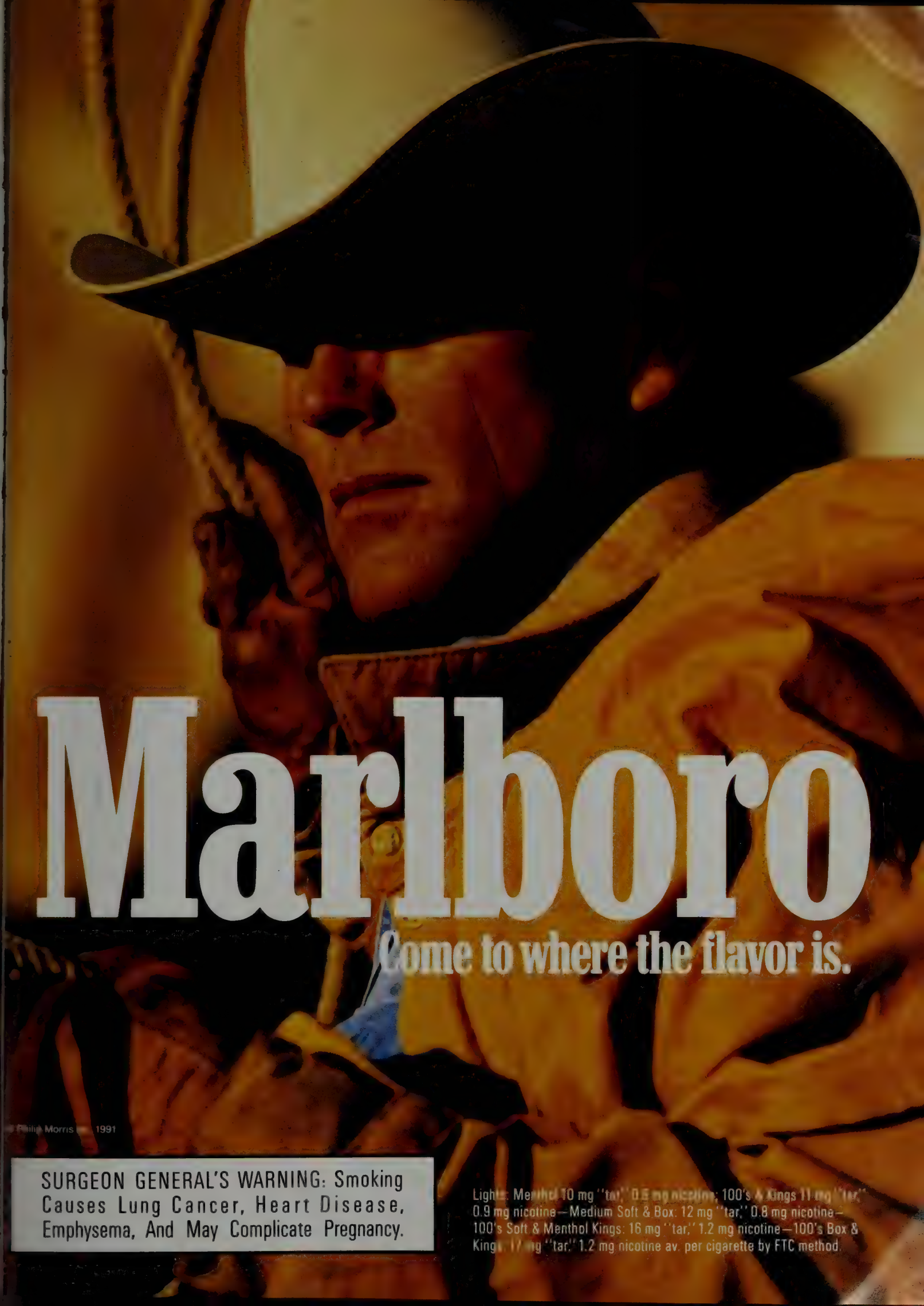
By Michael Lutin

Gertrude Lawrence

Vanity Fair
September 1929

"I'm not what you'd call wonderfully talented, but I do make the best of things. All I really lack is a private life," confessed English stage star Gertrude Lawrence. So in 1929, her old pal Noël Coward obligingly wrote *Private Lives* for her as he lay bedridden with the flu in Shanghai's old Cathay Hotel. Not that his heroic homage was an instant hit. After reading the play, Lawrence coolly wired him that there was "nothing wrong that couldn't be fixed." Coward countered that the only thing that would need fixing was her performance. The barbed bons mots of the Lawrence-Coward repartee shone through the characters of the divorced but still archly amorous Amanda and Elyot, making *Private Lives* the toast of the West End and Broadway. And Coward was still so mad about the girl that he wrote Lawrence a second show, *Tonight at 8:30*. But then, "Gertie" definitely had a talent to be a muse. She inspired the Gershwins' *Oh, Kay!*, Weill and Hart's *Lady in the Dark*, and Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The King and I*. Joan Collins and Simon Jones are the newest Amanda and Elyot, opening next month at Broadway's Broadhurst Theatre.

Photograph by STEICHEN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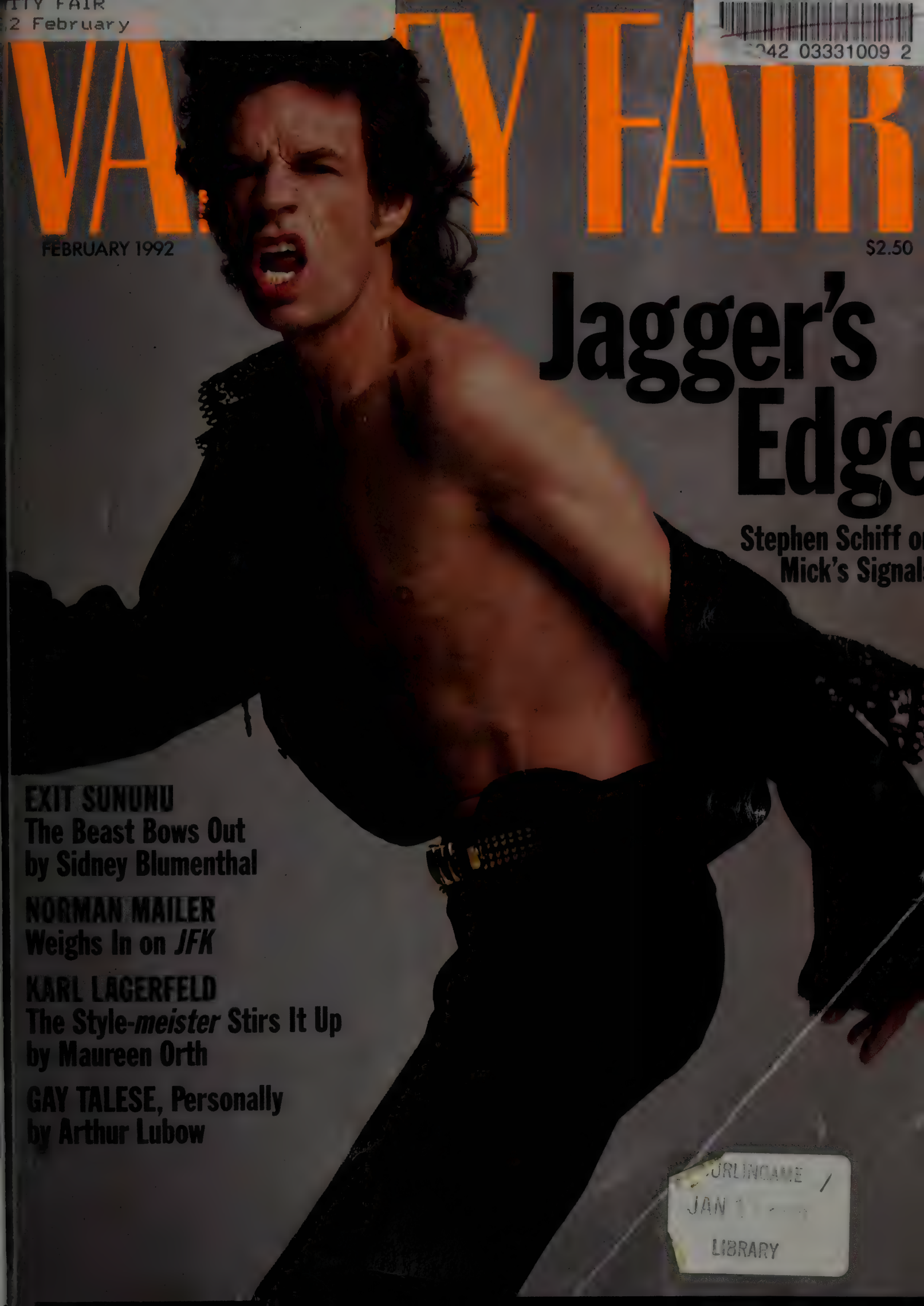

Jagger's Edge

Stephen Schiff o
Mick's Signal

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The Beast Bows Out
by Sidney Blumenthal

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The Style-*meister* Stirs It Up
by Maureen Orth

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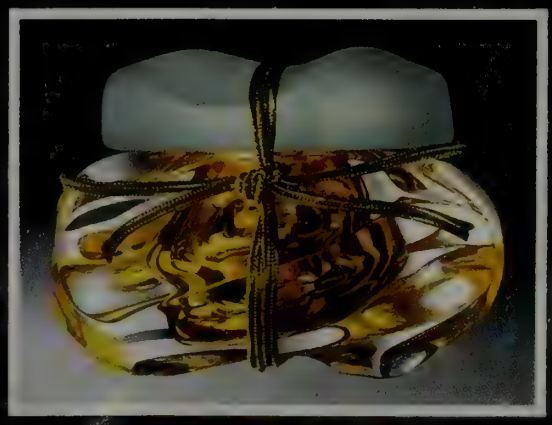

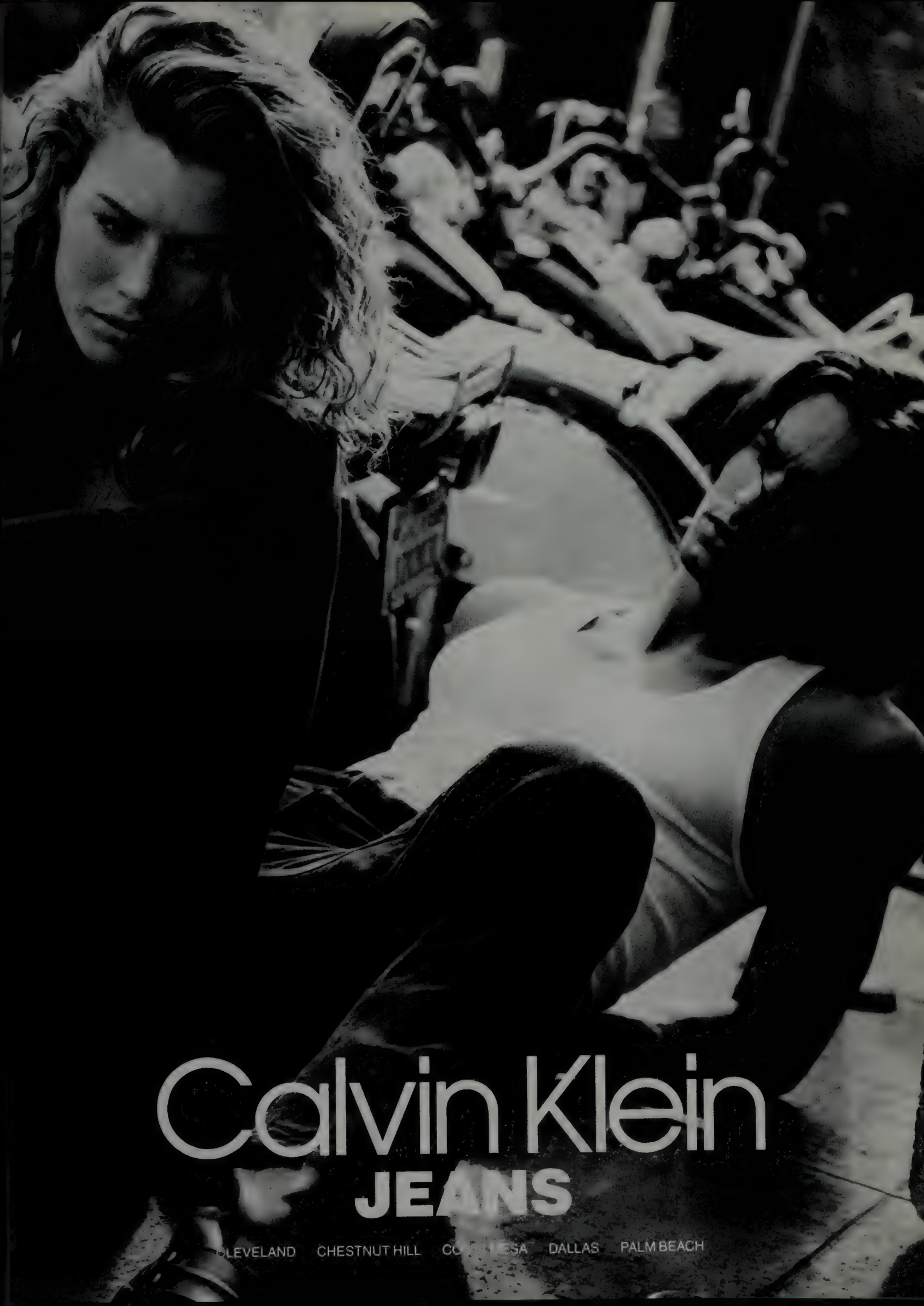
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VANITY FAIR®

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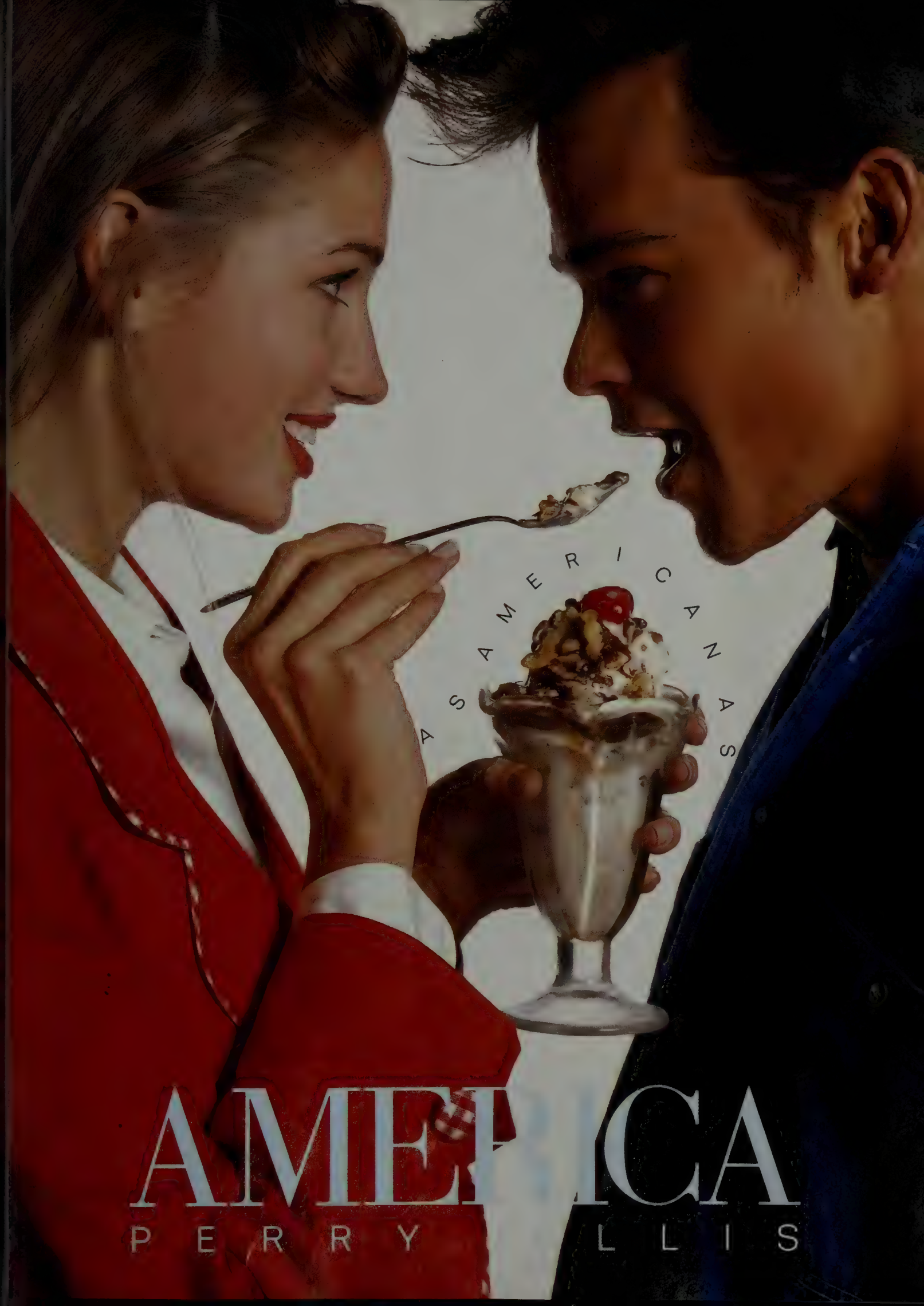
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Editor's Letter

Sununu's No-no's

JEAN PAGLIUSO

It is not given to White House chiefs of staff to be well loved. Proximity to God makes it easy to forget you are only there as the help—Donald Regan even thought he could see off Nancy Reagan and her astrologer. Exceptional charm and diplomacy are required to mute the resentments the role inevitably creates. It is therefore all the more bizarre that George Bush, proclaiming a kinder and gentler administration, appointed John Sununu to the post. When "King John" finally resigned at year's end, it was the climax of a three-year blowout of bombast and paranoia that stunned even the most seasoned Hill watchers.

Sidney Blumenthal's portrait of the White House Caliban (page 108) is a cautionary morality play for any would-be tyrant who thinks he can single-handedly out-intrigue Congress, insult the press, and humiliate his Cabinet colleagues. Sununu's rampage through the corridors of power is over, much to his own surprise: just two weeks before he was dumped he was planning not only to stay on as chief of staff but to run the re-election campaign from the White House. In an election year, however, Caliban's reign remains significant for what it says about Prospero. Why would the president appoint such a man and then tolerate such an outrageous performance for so long?

The easy answer is that Bush owed him and that he was still a link to the party's disgruntled right wing. The former governor of New Hampshire was a parochial pit bull who seized the day by handing a foundering Bush his state's all-important 1988 primary race, and then savaged every liberal idea that approached the Oval Office. But Blumenthal suggests there are more telling reasons why Bush kept Sununu around.

The president could keep his hands clean, leaving the dirty business of fixing and intimidating to political animals like Sununu. Like his ally the late Lee Atwater, Sununu would say what Bush could not say and do what Bush did not want to be seen doing.

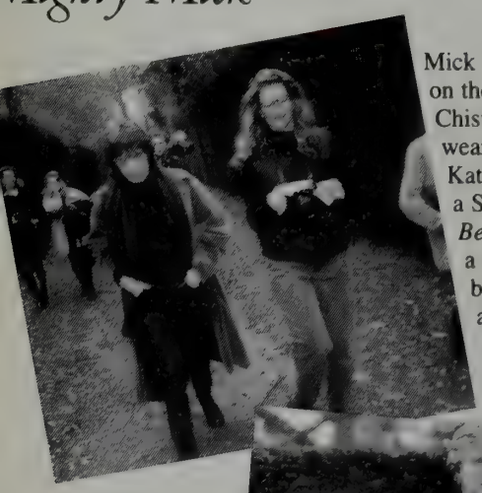
In the end, ironically, Sununu, for all his overdog ways, had to obey his master's voice. He boasted that he was answerable only to a constituency of one, but the constituency was doing badly in the polls. Chiefs of staff have often played the role of fall guy in times of presidential heat. Sununu could not save himself because he could not save Bush from the ominous overture to 1992.

Tina Brown

Editor in chief

Cover

Mighty Mick



Mick Jagger and Annie Leibovitz on the grounds of London's Chiswick House. *Left,* Jagger wears an overcoat by Katharine Hamnett and a Sulka cashmere sweater. *Below,* Jagger wears a velvet jacket by Giorgio Armani and a shirt by Katharine Hamnett.

Mick Jagger wears a shirt by Accomplice, jeans by Lip Service, and belt by Gianni Versace. Grooming by Caroline Clements. Styled by Marina Schiano. Photographed exclusively for *V.F.* by Annie Leibovitz.

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Contributors

Leslie Bennetts has known Nora Ephron, the subject of her piece this month, for more than fifteen years. "I have always admired Ephron's work," she says, "and been fascinated by the question of writers' using material from their own lives. Nora's directorial debut seemed like a good time to take a closer look."

Sidney Blumenthal, a senior editor at *The New Republic,* is writing a book on Secretary of State James Baker for HarperCollins. Of this month's piece on Sununu, he says, "The John Sununu story is the opposite of the James Baker story. It is not the Washington success story, but the Washington failure story."

Bob Colacello is currently based in Paris covering the European cultural and social scene. "The Victor Emmanuel story has everything," he says of this issue's piece, "yachts, guns, a royal prince, an innocent victim, a mystery man—and a trial that was put off for thirteen years."

Alan Friedman, New York correspondent for the *Financial Times* of London, is the author of *Agnelli and the Network of Italian Power* (NAL) and has appeared frequently on ABC's *Nightline*. In recent months, he has extensively covered the B.C.C.I. scandal for the *Financial Times*. He is a two-time British Press Award winner, most recently in 1990 for his investigation of Iraq's nuclear-missile procurement scheme.

Lloyd Grove, a reporter for *The Washington Post,* is working on a book about the U.S. Senate.

Arthur Lubow's biography, *The Reporter Who Would Be King* (Scribners), on the turn-of-the-century war correspondent Richard Harding Davis, will be out this summer.

Norman Mailer's novel *Harlot's Ghost* is out from Random House.

Maureen Orth, a Washington-based journalist, traveled to Paris and went behind the scenes of the spring collections of both Chanel and Karl Lagerfeld to profile, she says, "the iconoclastic philosophe of fashion."

Stephen Schiff, *V.F.*'s critic-at-large, frequently covers cultural subjects.

Kathleen Tynan, a London-based novelist and screenwriter, is the author of *The Life of Kenneth Tynan* (Morrow), a biography of her late husband. She is writing two books for Random House.

James Wolcott has written for *Harper's, The New Republic,* and the London *Observer.*

Stephen Schiff on rock 'n' roll's living legend Mick Jagger, page 100.

Kathleen Tynan remembers director Tony Richardson, page 130.

Sidney Blumenthal on the downfall of former White House chief of staff John Sununu, page 108.

Maureen Orth deconstructs Karl Lagerfeld and the House of Chanel, page 116.

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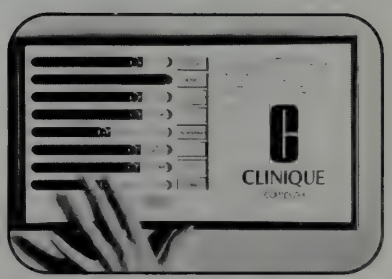

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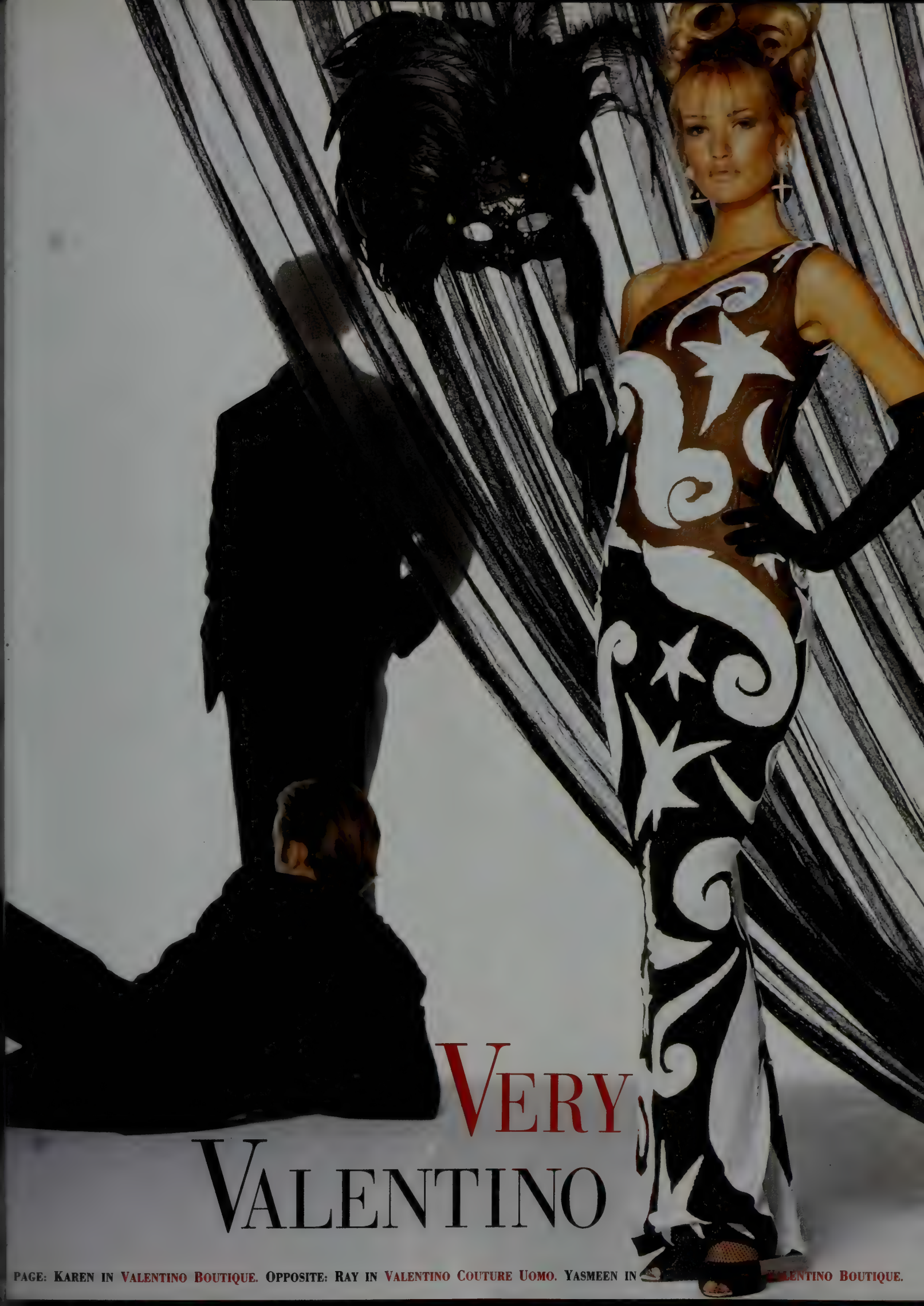

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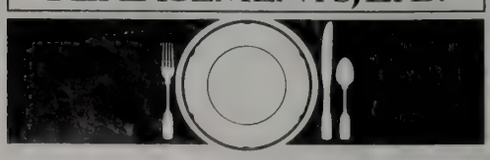

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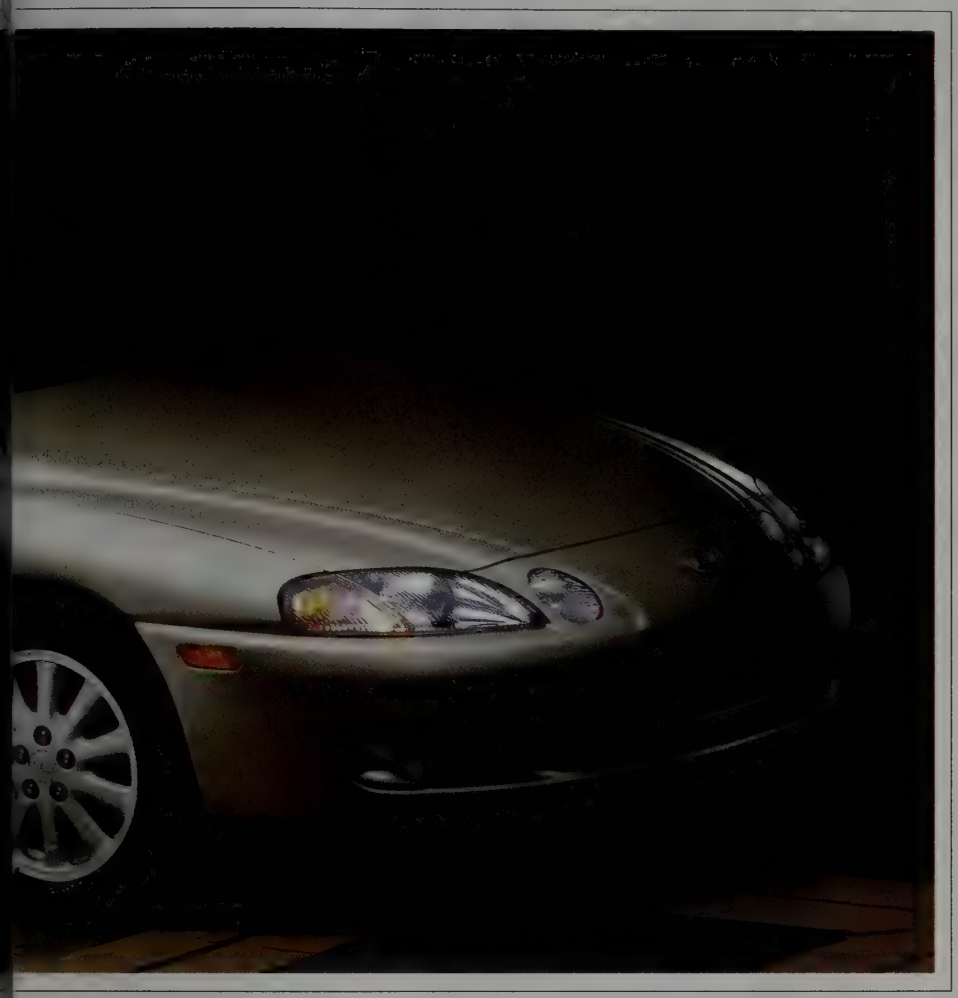

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Letters

READERS BITE BACK

Salisbury's Take

The December issue just possibly is the best single issue of any magazine, period. Marietta ["Marietta Tree: Serious Money," by Marie Brenner] is brilliant beyond belief, Peter Matthiessen ["Higher Matthiessen," by Michael Shnayerson] almost as good. I don't care for Bette Midler, but "La Belle Bette," by Kevin Sessums, is a splendid piece of work. Annie Leibovitz's portfolio ["*V.F.*'s 1991 Hall of Fame"] excels it all. Plus Gail Sheehy ["Red Star Falling"] and the ever odd-focus Roxane Witke ["The Last Days of Madame Mao"]. Quite honestly, such fireworks should be forbidden by law.

HARRISON SALISBURY
Taconic, Connecticut

Unholy Acts

Thank you for publishing Leslie Bennetts's "Unholy Alliances" [December]. Although, as I point out in my book, *Abused Boys* (Fawcett), more than 90,000 boys under the age of thirteen are sexually abused each year in America, very little has been written on the subject. Most people like to believe that child-abusers are dirty old men in filthy raincoats who snatch children from playgrounds. Unfortunately, a child is three times more likely to be sexually abused by a family member or some trusted adult such as a teacher, a baby-sitter, or a clergyman. Childhood sexual abuse is so common in this country that if you know ten people, you know at least one victim.

MIC HUNTER, Therapist and Psychologist
St. Paul, Minnesota

Bennetts has blown the lid off the biggest cover-up since Watergate. I am not a Catholic, but when I hear Holy Mother the Church's high-and-mighty rhetoric against pro-choice, my stomach turns. By condemning abortion as a sin against the unborn while it discreetly recycles child-molesters, the church has sunk to a new low. No wonder most of the Catholics I know are ex.

LINDA MEIERHOFFER
Leawood, Kansas

As a fellow Catholic, I would like to say that New Orleans district attorney Harry Connick Sr. should have consulted the guardians of the church regarding the distinctions between sin and crime, as well as the earthly penance that would be paid for the sins of Father Cinel.

HELEN GRANBERRY LEWIS
Gulfport, Mississippi

I don't know who is more despicable, Father Cinel, the local archdiocese, or Cinel's lawyer, Arthur "Buddy" Lemann. If the gay community backs the issues Lemann intends to pursue, it will lose much of what it has strived for—shutting the door after the horse has bolted.

MRS. D. MURILLO
Beckenham, Kent, England

Leslie Bennetts takes an unjustified liberty in describing incidents of sexual abuse by clergy as Canada's "epidemic of priest pedophilia." Without taking anything away from the horridness of the crimes, we must put such cases in perspective. Reportedly, about 40 of the 14,345 Catholic priests and brothers in

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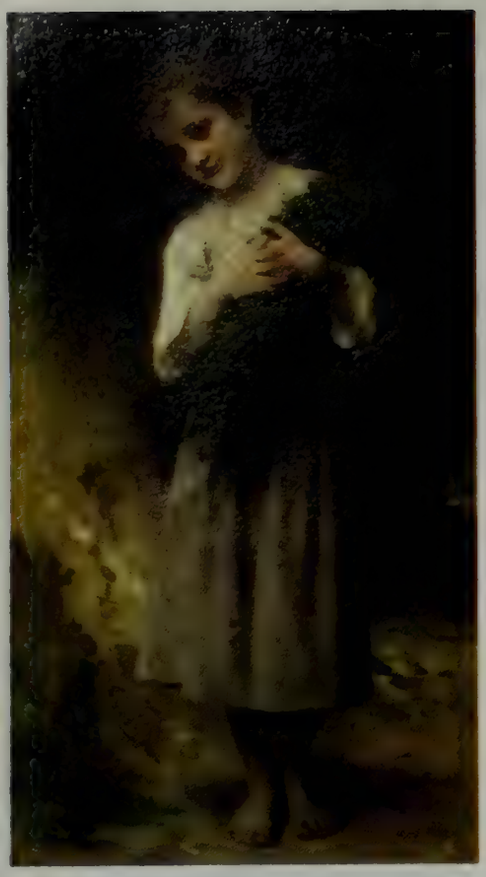

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Fine English Furniture, Objects of Art, Ceramics and Chinese Export Porcelain, January 24

Important Furniture, Silver, Books and Decorative Arts from the Collection of William A. McCarty-Cooper, January 25

Fine Oriental Rugs and Carpets, February 8

19th Century Paintings, Drawings and Watercolors, February 19

Impressionist and Modern Paintings, Drawings and Sculpture, February 25

Contemporary Art, February 27

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Worldwide Stamps and Covers, March 11

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Left, top to bottom:
William Adolphe Bouguereau, *Jeune Fille*, signed and dated lower left, oil on canvas, 50½ x 28 in., to be sold February 19.
A Russian Neoclassical fruitwood *recamier*, to be sold March 6.
A Staffordshire creamware dovecote, circa 1755, 8¾ in. high, to be sold January 24.
The 'Double Geneva' Cantonal pair, to be sold March 11.

Right, top to bottom:
A set of four unusual Colonial hardwood *bergères*, 19th century, probably Indian, from the Collection of William A. McCarty-Cooper, to be sold January 25.
Louis Valtat, *Les rochers à Anthéor*, signed with initials bottom right, oil on canvas, 25⅝ x 31½ in., to be sold February 25.
A parcel-gilt wood tabouret, by Pierre Legrain, 20½ in., from the Collection of William A. McCarty-Cooper, to be sold January 25.
Mochteshan Kashan rug, 6 ft. 3 in. x 4 ft. 3 in., from the Collection of Meyer-Müeller, to be sold February 8.

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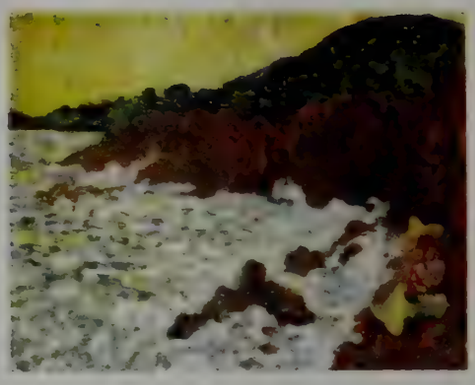

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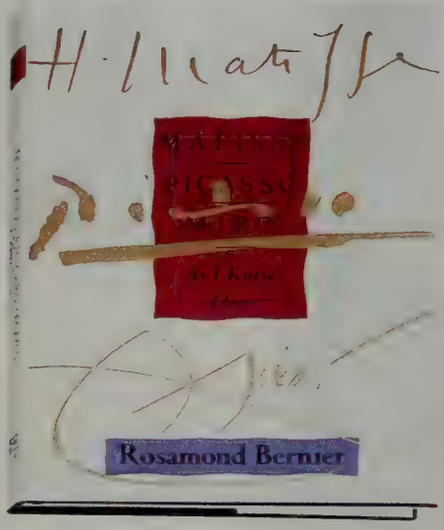

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Letters

the dominion have been charged with or convicted of such crimes, which works out to .3 percent, or fewer than 1 in 360. That does not make the forty cases any less disgusting, but neither does it signal an epidemic.

DAVID PAOLINI
Toronto, Ontario

I commend you for running the story on the Catholic hierarchy's problem with clerical pedophilia. This is the same hierarchy that is campaigning vigorously to get tax support for its sectarian schools, to outlaw freedom of conscience on abortion, and to block efforts to deal intelligently with the worldwide population problem. It is disgusting that so many politicians are willing to be seduced by these guys.

ALEC RANDALL
Aspen Hill, Maryland

Your article reminds us that our society must find effective ways of reaching out compassionately to people with sexual problems—be they clergy, counselors, Scout leaders, or others. The Franciscans at St. Francis of Assisi Church in New York City recognize the value of self-help groups such as Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous (S.L.A.A.) and Survivors of Incest Anonymous (S.I.A.). Space at St. Francis's premises is provided throughout the week for their meetings, as well as for a wide base of ecumenical groups. Confessors and spiritual directors are available at the church for those who seek such assistance. Recourse to a higher power is a valid option for all who seek a better understanding of how to handle their sexual needs.

FATHER CASSIAN A. MILES, O.F.M.
New York, New York

There'd be less unholy clerical sex were celibacy optional again.

JULIA BUONOCORE
New York, New York

"Suffer the little children to come unto me" takes on a whole new meaning when applied to Dino Cinel. It's mind-boggling that for all its pompous preaching about being the consummate authority on what's right and wrong with the world, the Catholic Church isn't tripping over itself to condemn criminal priests. Instead of using its formidable power to bring to light the most heinous among us—the child-molesters—it chooses to bury its head in the sand while lives are being ruined.

DIANNE L. GALLAGHER
Bedford, Massachusetts

Doughty Marietta

I thought Marie Brenner's article "Marietta Tree: Serious Money" [December] was absolutely wonderful. Marietta was an extraordinary woman, as beautiful inside as she was outside, because she had a spirit that really made her light up and give out. She will be very much missed.

BROOKE ASTOR
New York, New York

I am the person to whom Marietta wrote just days before her death that she was unwell but expected to be on her feet by Labor Day. She was a woman of immense charm and boundless energy who saw herself as a citizen of the world. She visited Australia twice a year for about ten years, and for a long time was the only female director of an Australian public company, Lend Lease. Marietta was also president of the American Friends of the Australian National Gallery in Canberra, and in this capacity arranged several large gifts. She concentrated on the positive and diminished the negative. She taught us that by getting up a bit earlier each day one could achieve a great deal more. Brenner's article captured well the spirit of a rare person. We shall not see her likes again.

HENRY GILLESPIE
South Yarra, Australia

Marie Brenner's article on Marietta Tree is extraordinary. I first met Marietta in the late sixties. I was a graduate student and took a summer job at the 1967 New York State Constitutional Convention. As an intern, I sat on a stool waiting for a delegate to give me an errand. I sat next to Marietta. From that summer on, she was enormously kind to me personally and very helpful professionally. It was Marietta who urged me to take the opportunity to lead Wisconsin. "You'll get more invitations and be taken more seriously if you lead a great university," she told me. "Go. New York will always be here if you want to return." She was something.

DONNA SHALALA, Chancellor
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin

Marie Brenner caught Marietta Tree perfectly. Marietta was in the room when I was reading the piece. The last time I saw Marietta was when we went together to Douglas Fairbanks Jr.'s wedding on May 30. He is my godfather. Marietta wore a great hat that she said she

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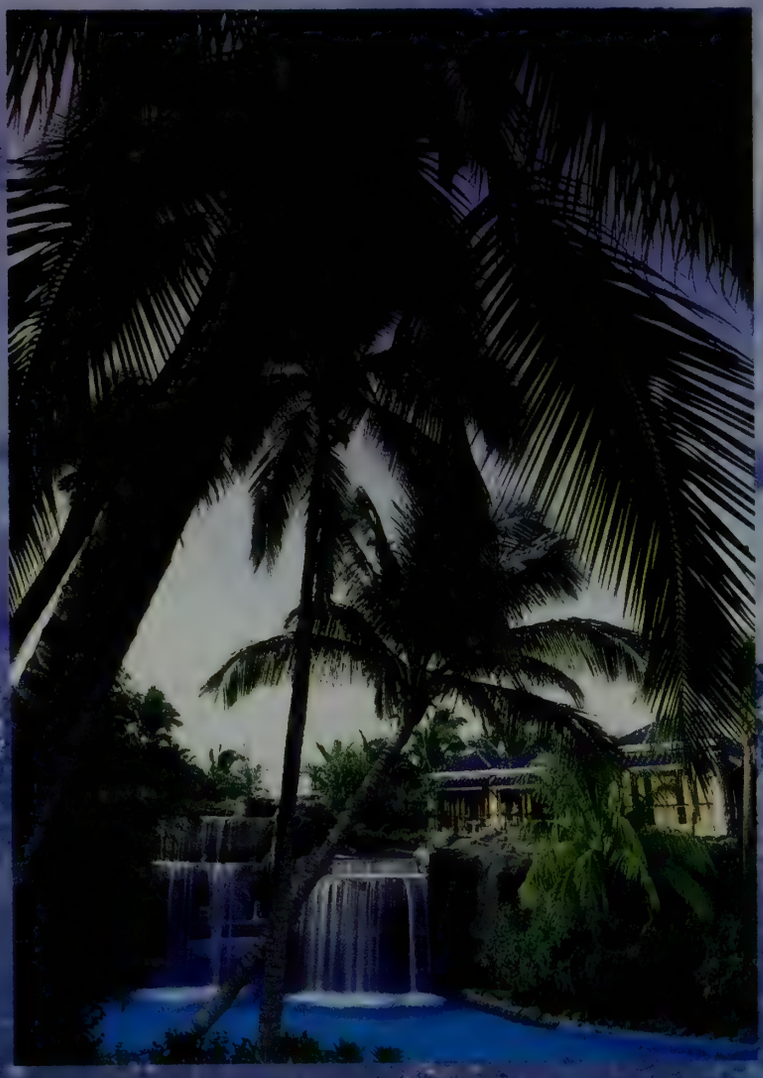

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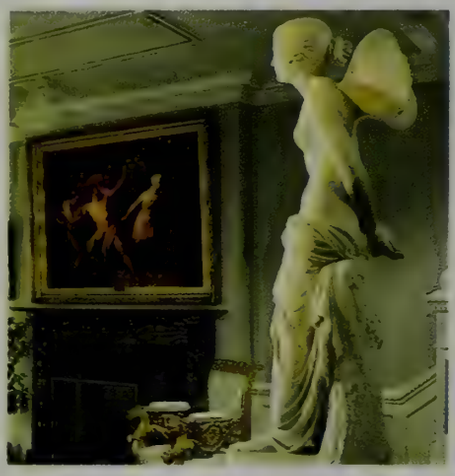

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Letters

hadn't worn in more than fifteen years. She strode down Fifth Avenue with a flirtatious look in her eye—and legs to match. I remarked how nice it was that Douglas's three daughters had accepted the marriage. "Not at all," she replied. "They have obviously settled the money issue. It always comes down to that, Jamie." How wonderful to have known her almost all my life, and how great to read about her in such a truly lovely piece.

JAMES G. NIVEN
New York, New York

Safe Bette

Kevin Sessums' brilliant story on Bette Midler ["La Belle Bette," December] is the first to cut straight to the bone of just exactly who Bette von Haselberg truly is. Midler's spirited yet poignant advice to those who have closed their eyes to the AIDS crisis (which, much to my regret, was not pointed out by our *grande* dame as being something other than a gay disease) told all of us that underneath that vivacious and tenacious exterior lies a truly comforting individual. Anyone who can accomplish what Bette Midler has in her extraordinary life, and still manage to gaze in girlish awe at Mercedes Bass's glamour, deserves the most fragrant and colorful garden of plaudits. What a world!

BENJAMIN A. SIMON
Laguna Beach, California

I'm sure I'm not the only person who's been a Midler fan from the beginning, and I'm still here. She gets better and better with each project she takes on.

MICHAEL MILITELLO
Lakewood, Ohio

I would like to add a few details about the evening Ahmet Ertegün saw Bette Midler for the first time and signed her to an Atlantic Records contract. Friends had told me about this singer I must see. But Bette was the only woman allowed into the baths, so I waited until she appeared at Upstairs at the Downstairs. During her entire engagement, I had the front-row-center table. The night before Ahmet came to the club, I invited a friend who was in from L.A. She fell instantly under the spell of the diva, and told me that another friend of ours, a C.M.A. agent based in Mexico City, was also visiting New York and, furthermore, was a friend of Ertegün's. We called the agent, and the date was set with Ahmet for the next night. When he saw Bette, he made up his mind on the spot. So for the sake of my grown children and my ego, I must grab some credit here.

JUDITH LEIGHTON
New York, New York

I was angered by the statement made by "one Midler scriptwriter" that "high-level production executives" at Disney "comment on her appearance...and how nobody wants to see her in a romance." This kind of thinking doesn't surprise me (it's what put Michelle Pfeiffer in Kathy Bates's role in *Frankie and Johnny* and ruined the movie, in my opinion), but as one of the legions of filmgoing women who do not resemble angular Nordic goddesses, I find it highly offensive.

SHARON GOODMAN
New York, New York

The article by Kevin Sessums is quite possibly the most original and insightful piece about Bette Midler that I have read in eighteen years. I am saving this one.

ROBERTO GUERRERO
Key Biscayne, Florida

Three cheers—no, *ten* cheers for Bette! She never fails to show her true colors—sometimes deep blue, other times hot pink, but always as vibrant and proud as a peacock. Strut on, Bette, strut on.

PERRY TRITTO
New York, New York

Conspiracy Theory

Thank you and Ron Rosenbaum for "The Strange Death of Danny Casolaro" [December]. I recently read that Jon Peters will soon be starting shooting on *October Surprise*, based on ex–National Security Council specialist Gary Sick's book. Whether the general public accepts the work of Dan Casolaro or not, it seems to me that there are enough characters involved in this investigation for Peters to make several motion pictures.

PAUL J. HANSON
San Gabriel, California

Letters to the editor should be sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to: The Editor, Vanity Fair, 350 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10017. The letters chosen for publication may be edited for length and clarity.

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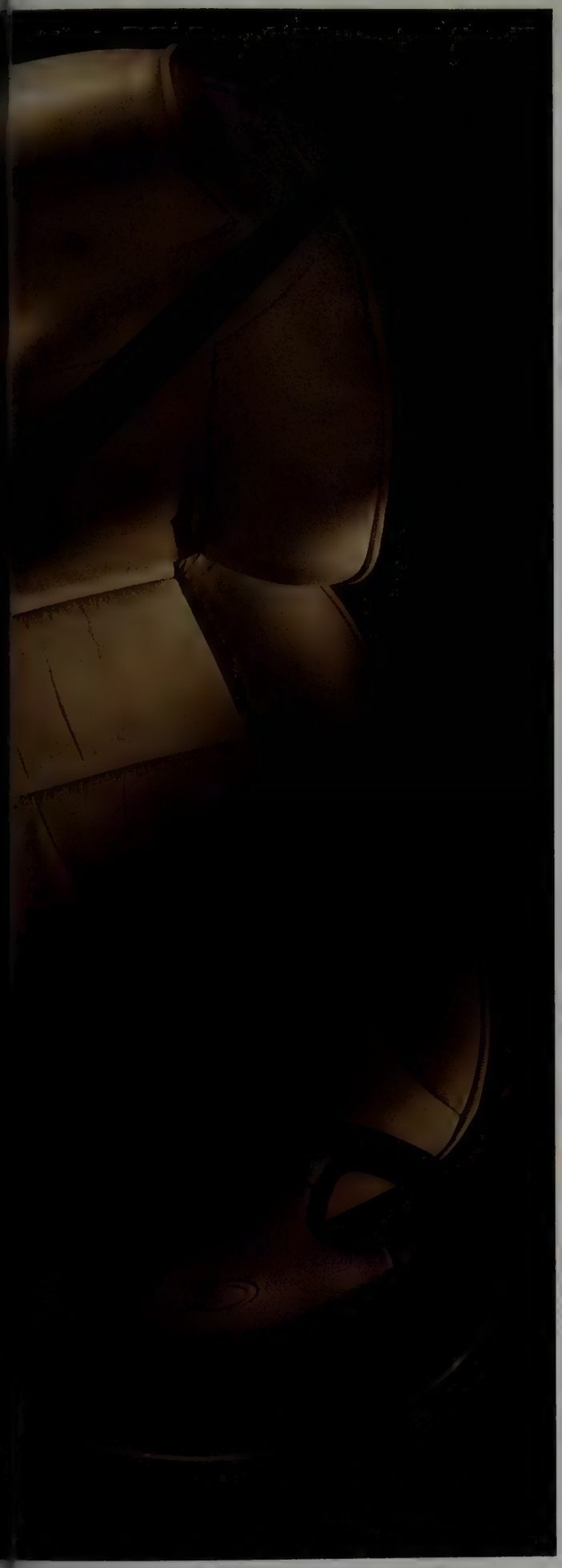

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B.C.C.I.'S DEADLY SECRETS

The strange and terrifying odyssey of Masihur Rahman, the first B.C.C.I. insider to spill the beans to the U.S. Senate

BY ALAN FRIEDMAN

On a rosy Saturday morning less than a month after the world's leading regulators shut down the scandal-ridden, $20 billion Bank of Credit and Commerce International (B.C.C.I.) in July, a bespectacled and diminutive Bengali banker nervously boarded an Air India 747 jumbo at London's Heathrow Airport and took his seat at the very rear of the jet. Masihur Rahman, the fifty-seven-year-old Calcutta-born former chief financial officer of B.C.C.I., was in a state of high anxiety as he waited for the packed aircraft to be cleared for takeoff on its journey to New York.

Rahman—"Masi" to his friends and family—had good reason to be scared. He knew too many secrets about the worldwide scandal that had engulfed the institution that was nicknamed "the Bank of Crooks and Criminals." Rahman had traveled on B.C.C.I.-sponsored trips with former president Jimmy Carter and had been privy to the bank's relations with a colorful roster of other world leaders and personalities, including Manuel Noriega, Adnan Khashoggi, Muhammad Ali, former British prime minister Lord Callaghan, former West German chancellor Willy Brandt, and the late Pakistani dictator General Mohammad Zia ul-Haq.

Rahman was flying to the U.S. to become a star witness for American prosecutors, one of the few B.C.C.I. insiders able to nail his former bosses with documents and information. But he was also fleeing the terror of the previous few months in London, where he had received death threats, where his wife had picked up the phone to hear anonymous callers tell her that "your husband has been in a serious car accident" or that "your son is not in school." Mysterious cars had crept into his driveway in suburban Surrey in the middle of the night—turning their lights and engines off. Gunshots had been fired through the bedroom window of a close friend from B.C.C.I. As a result, Rahman had bundled his wife and two small children out of the country and had himself been living a paranoid and peripatetic existence, checking into and out of a series of cheap hotel rooms, moving almost every night. He was even considering an offer of plastic surgery from the F.B.I. under the federal witness-protection program.

The last phone call warned, "Your life is not worth a penny." ***Above:*** **Masi Rahman with his wife, Elyn, and their children.**

Britain's High Court had placed a gag order on him, enjoining him from speaking to the press or public. Fleet Street editors had dispatched their bloodhounds to track down Rahman, who was dubbed "the Squealer" when it was learned he was the first insider to start detailing the spectacular fraud at B.C.C.I. to U.S. and British authorities. And Senator John Kerry, the Massachusetts Democrat leading a congressional investigation of B.C.C.I., had been pleading with Rahman's American wife to get the B.C.C.I. executive to come to Washington and testify before the Senate.

The last telephone call Rahman received in London was from a former B.C.C.I. colleague in Dubai, who warned him to leave London, and told him, "Your life is not worth a penny." The ominous call conjured up a dark

JAMES HAMILTON

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vision of Roberto Calvi, the Banco Ambrosiano chairman who died mysteriously in London ten years ago. "I thought I would just disappear, like Calvi, and be killed," Rahman recalls. "I was just a Bengali, after all, and I knew there were B.C.C.I. people and even intelligence people who could dispose of me in a very sophisticated way."

After testifying to the Serious Fraud Office in London, he borrowed the money for an economy ticket to New York, getting the last seat available on the flight. He threw a few clothes into a suitcase and was driven to Heathrow at eight in the morning in a friend's battered old Ford Escort. "All the time, I kept looking and thinking someone would stop me. The press had planted people in front of my Surrey home, but I never went back there. The D.A.'s office in New York told me it was getting too hot to stay in London. So I just left. I didn't even tell my lawyer."

As the Air India flight thundered toward Kennedy Airport, Senator Kerry was on the phone to Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, demanding federal protection for Rahman. "We were worried about his safety, and I had been getting ready to go to London myself," says Kerry, adding that he called Eagleburger "the minute I heard Rahman was on that plane because we were concerned about an interception."

Manhattan district attorney Robert Morgenthau, the trailblazing prosecutor on B.C.C.I., was equally concerned as he coordinated the welcoming operation with Kerry's staff, U.S. Customs agents, and the New York Federal Reserve. "Rahman was *very* significant," says the seventy-two-year-old Morgenthau, sipping a Diet Pepsi in a paper-strewn Manhattan office that looks like a gangbuster's office straight out of a 1940s thriller. "He was one of the key witnesses being harassed in London. A lot of lives were destroyed by the B.C.C.I. affair, and his was certainly one of them."

One of Morgenthau's top investigators sums up the situation more bluntly: "We had to get Rahman's ass out of London, and quickly."

Once he was airborne, Rahman, a man with small, intense brown eyes and brindled hair, felt "a sense of tremendous depression." He wondered what price he would pay for having decided to talk. But most of all he felt sorry for himself. "I knew I was a whistle-blower. They called me a squealer. I thought maybe I had made a mistake. Had I told the truth or was it just an ego trip? Why did I talk? Why did I do it? I wondered if God had put me there, near the toilet, if I was somehow being punished, if my life had gone from all to nothing."

At Kennedy, Rahman was hustled through Immigration by three federal officials and soon reunited with his wife and two children, a six-year-old boy and four-year-old girl. But his depression continued when Morgenthau's men parked the entire Rahman family in a Manhattan safe house, a tiny apartment rented by the D.A.'s office. "It was selected because the buildings are so close together that no one could take potshots," explains Rahman's wife, Elyn. "But it was so dark we needed the lights on all the time."

One top investigator sums up the situation bluntly: "We had to get Rahman's ass out of London, and quickly."

Now resettled into a comfortably discreet suburban split-level—owned by a former Drexel Burnham Lambert executive who is short of cash—with his monthly rent paid by Morgenthau's office, Rahman says he feels isolated and disoriented. He watches American sitcoms with his children and accompanies his wife on visits to nearby shopping malls. His days are spent sifting through financial records, appearing before grand juries, and submitting to endless debriefings by B.C.C.I. investigators from the Manhattan D.A.'s office, the Federal Reserve, the Department of Justice, and the British government's independent counsel, Lord Bingham. He is also preparing to write his memoirs, which he promises will be the first and only inside account of B.C.C.I.

In several days of meetings over a period of more than three weeks Rahman described to me his remarkable odyssey from a childhood in India under the Raj to his current circumstances as a key witness for U.S. prosecutors. He talked openly of the early, idealistic hopes of creating a Third World bank, of the almost voodoo culture inside B.C.C.I., and of the millions of dollars in alleged bribes paid to politicians around the world.

One U.S. investigator told me Rahman was "a moron" for allowing me to enter his hideaway. But Masi Rahman is a man who needs to tell his story, almost obsessively so. When he talks, it is a gushing stream-of-consciousness catharsis, his eyes dancing behind his glasses, his right eyebrow arching higher and higher. He speaks in a subcontinental accent reminiscent of the Indian doctor in the film version of E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*. And there is Forsterian pathos in his story—a British-educated former colonial who has overheard some of the Western world's dirtiest secrets. Jonathan Winer, Senator Kerry's chief B.C.C.I. staffer, says Rahman strikes him mostly "as a gentle and very nice family man who has been scared to death."

Masihur Rahman was born in Calcutta in 1934 to a life of considerable pomp and splendor as the fifth of nine children of the British-appointed chief justice of the High Court of India. This was India more than a decade before the subcontinent was partitioned, and Rahman's father was the first Muslim to achieve the title of Indian civil servant, which was rather a big deal in those last years of the Raj. Old photographs from the 1940s show the proud family, although not its army of servants, cooks, and guards.

At the age of thirteen, however, with his father dead and the British gone, Rahman became a refugee, one of the hundreds of thousands of Muslims who fled the violence of Hindu-dominated Calcutta. He still has vivid memories of his mother and brothers and sisters boarding a train "swarming with people, inside and on the roof" for the forty-five-hour journey away from his home. "All of our trunks of clothes and even our pet monkey was left behind, sold for a few rupees at the station because we could not take anything with us. The experience gave me a profound survival instinct that I have never lost."

Rahman and his family went to live with a poor uncle who ran the tiny railway station in Chittagong, in what was then called East Pakistan and is today Bangladesh. It was an immediate plunge from riches to rags, the whole family crammed into a one-room tin hut with walls of bamboo matting and a floor of mud. There, without electricity or running water, the young Masi Rahman and his siblings slept on the floor in shifts because of the lack of space. The adults would sit up at night, talking behind a bamboo partition as the children curled up on the floor, and to this day Rahman says he maintains a habit he developed

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at the time to shut out the light and noise—he always sleeps with his right arm covering his eyes and ears.

As a youth, Rahman received little in the way of formal education, learning to read at home by kerosene lamp and earning food and clothing by tutoring others in math and English. In 1956 he traveled to England aboard a cargo ship and followed an elder brother into the study of accounting. Working in London restaurants to pay his way through college, Rahman eventually qualified as a fellow of the prestigious Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales. In 1961 he returned to his family.

The scarcity of trained managers in underdeveloped East Pakistan meant that a British-educated accountant was in great demand. Rahman's first job, at the age of twenty-seven, was as finance controller of the newly established East Pakistan Industrial Development Corporation, a state agency responsible for building refineries, petrochemical plants, and other heavy-industry complexes. For a young man this was a heady opportunity; he was soon dealing with World Bank and International Monetary Fund officials and was able to afford not only his daily attire of freshly pressed white trousers and white shirts but also decent lodgings and a little black Austin.

The job also led to a fateful contact—Rahman's first meeting, in 1965, with two men who would later become the chief villains of the B.C.C.I. affair. They were Agha Hasan Abedi, the charming Pakistani founder and chairman of B.C.C.I., whose eyes, says Rahman, "betray both God and the Devil," and Swaleh Naqvi, Abedi's sidekick, who later became chief executive of B.C.C.I.

Plenty of bankers would come to see Rahman, trying to drum up loan business from the Pakistan development agency, and Abedi and Naqvi—then top officials at Pakistan's United Bank—were among those who courted him. In 1966, to Rahman's surprise, Abedi offered him a job as executive vice president of United Bank, "even though I had never worked in a bank before." In fact, Rahman was so inexperienced that he had a junior member of the bank tutor him at home on the basic principles of banking.

Abedi, who would eventually be called "the Rasputin of the Middle East," was then a high-living wheeler-dealer in Karachi, where Rahman moved when he took the United Bank position. Although he admits having heard, even then, in the 1960s, stories about Abedi cutting corners, Rahman loved the glory of his new position, which included a house, a guard, two drivers, and spanking-new Dodge Dart and Nissan cars, plus a cook, gardener, and nanny to look after the children of his first wife. His earnings quickly soared from 30,000 to 100,000 rupees a year. At the age of thirty-two, he had finally regained the privileged life-style of his childhood.

Abedi was always a bon vivant, says Rahman, recalling the boss's love of handmade silk shirts, Savile Row tailored suits, and expensive Islamic artworks, and his luxurious twenty-five-by-forty-foot office on the seventh floor of the American Life building in downtown Karachi. The furnishings were of carved mahogany, and Abedi's aesthetic taste ran to a blinding décor of snow-white carpets, walls, and curtains: "It was white *everywhere*," reports Rahman.

B.C.C.I. minions would scour Lahore brothels for beautiful young girls as gifts to Sheikh Zayed's entourage.

As far back as 1969, he says, Abedi seemed to have "a sixth sense" that President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto planned to nationalize the Pakistani banking system. Abedi began courting sheikhs, traveling to Abu Dhabi, and nurturing a relationship that would eventually yield billions for B.C.C.I.—with Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahayan, the leader of the United Arab Emirates. And when the sheikh came to northern Pakistan to go falcon hunting, Abedi's minions would scour the brothels of nearby Lahore for beautiful young girls as gifts to the sheikh's entourage.

Even then, Rahman says, the charismatic Abedi was developing a cultlike hold on his followers. "I and six other top aides were all given a brown envelope containing a book. We were told to read the book and to meditate about it." The book was *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, and when Rahman finished reading it he was told by Abedi "that he would take us on magical voyages to places we had never been, that he would show us things we had never seen."

Two months later, on New Year's Day 1972, Bhutto announced the bank nationalizations, hired Rahman as an adviser on banking, and placed Abedi under house arrest, accused of corruption. Later that year, still confined to his Karachi mansion, Abedi summoned Rahman. "He told me he could not sleep anymore, because people like me had walked out of his life. It sounds funny now, but I was touched. He talked to me about my family, my cat, and my dog. And I asked him, 'How do you feel about all of this? They say you are a crook.' He said, 'People like you and I will always build.' And then he took me to his study and showed me his handwritten notes—these were his first plans for the bank that would become B.C.C.I. He said, 'There are no Third World banks. Let us start one.' I said to him, 'Mr. Abedi, you are unbelievable.' He said, 'Rahman, in ten years' time you'll see, we will all be millionaires.' I was so excited. I told him that when he was free I would serve him again."

Abedi was eventually freed, and in late 1972 he and Naqvi persuaded Sheikh Zayed and the Bank of America to put up a mere $2.5 million to start the Bank of Credit and Commerce International. The bank was based in Abu Dhabi, which is where Rahman headed two years later. "When I arrived in Abu Dhabi, I was received in grand style," he remembers. "They even put me in the Hilton for a few nights, but I moved out because I thought it was costing the bank too much.

"I wondered at first how on God's earth we were going to make a bank work in Abu Dhabi, in the dirt and the desert," Rahman says. But then the OPEC oil embargo and quadrupled crude prices shook the world. For Abu Dhabi, B.C.C.I., and Rahman himself, money was no longer a problem.

Rahman's title—from 1974 until his dramatic departure in the summer of 1990—was chief financial officer of B.C.C.I. He was not only a founding executive, but also a member of its five-man central executive committee. In 1976, he moved from Abu Dhabi to the bank's new management headquarters, in London—a few steps away from the Bank of England—to help coordinate B.C.C.I.'s operations, which mushroomed to 430 branches in seventy-three countries.

If life had been good on 100,000 rupees a year in Karachi, Rahman found his new life in England—with a salary of

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$200,000 a year, a further $100,000 a year for expenses, a chauffeured Mercedes, a five-bedroom country house with swimming pool and servants, and a luxury pied-à-terre in London—was really swell. "The bank took care of *everything* for us," says Rahman. "We never wanted. It was limousines and jet planes everywhere, first class all the time at B.C.C.I."

Abedi, however, was aiming at more than just comfort. He was busy constructing a financial colossus that would soon have dealings with an international rogues' gallery of Third World despots, Middle Eastern arms dealers and terrorists, South American drug lords, C.I.A. covert operatives, and money-launderers of almost every nationality. Rahman sat on all the senior-management committees except for the crucial credit committee—which investigators say Abedi used to rubber-stamp his dirtiest deals. As a result, Rahman claims, he was kept in the dark about the bank's global fraud. Given the immunity he has received, U.S. prosecutors appear to agree, concluding that Rahman's lot should be that of a witness rather than a defendant.

B.C.C.I. has also been accused of running a Karachi-based "black network" of arms dealers and intelligence operatives who not only cooperated with the C.I.A. and other intelligence services but also engaged in drug dealing, arms dealing, extortion, kidnapping, and murder. Rahman reveals that even inside the bank's London headquarters Abedi maintained "his own secret police in the form of spies among the executives." One top executive, now charged with fraud and money-laundering, kept a little black book filled with compromising information on fellow bank officers that Rahman says "was used to destroy people who stepped out of line."

Abedi's gestapo-like tactics went hand in hand with his self-proclaimed religious fervor. "Abedi would often speak to me about what he called a moral balance sheet. He said it was not enough to keep a bank's records as a material balance sheet. He talked of how God would judge us if we were not moral," recounts Rahman. Abedi, who set aside specially designated "prayer rooms" at the bank, often described B.C.C.I. as a Muslim institution that would not only further the fortunes of the Third World but would also combat the "evil" of world Zionism. "Abedi always brought the Almighty into the picture," says Rahman. "I remember that he was once twenty minutes late for a meeting. When he came in he said, 'I'm sorry, but I'm late for a very good reason. As I came out of my office, I met God in the corridor and I had to talk with him.' There were 110 people at that meeting and they all listened in silence. Not a single person spoke, giggled, or dared to say anything."

Abedi, says Rahman, demanded absolute loyalty. "He was totally power-hungry and he mesmerized everyone. It became like a banking cult. You didn't question him. You lived rigidly to his standards by constantly talking of humility and ego. They made sure you didn't step out of line. Effectively, what happened is that you stopped questioning anything Mr. Abedi told you to do. And Mr. Abedi had a knack for making people feel inferior. He would call you to his desk and pretend to be writing something and because it was an open-plan office everyone would see you standing there and know you were being humiliated.

Inside B.C.C.I. headquarters, Abedi maintained "his own secret police in the form of spies among the executives."

"He had other techniques of embarrassing you. When he was angry his face would get at least two shades darker. He never shouted, never raised his voice, but his bitterness showed. He would ridicule one person in a staff meeting, pick the person out and ostracize him in front of the others, until you felt you were in a hot hell. It was such an effective technique that people dreaded whose turn it would be at the next meeting.

"I think he had equal components of good and evil, though he certainly had a great deal of concentrated evil in him. He was capable of vicious things, of playing with people's lives, of humiliating and manipulating people—of sucking the juice out of people. But then, he was also a strange paternal figure." He asked about the families of his executives, handed out compensation packages for school fees and housing, and assured his employees of cradle-to-grave security. "He would never fire anyone. He would just leave you in a state of suspended animation if he was displeased. You would continue drawing your salary and yet have nothing to do. It was really like a kind of brotherhood."

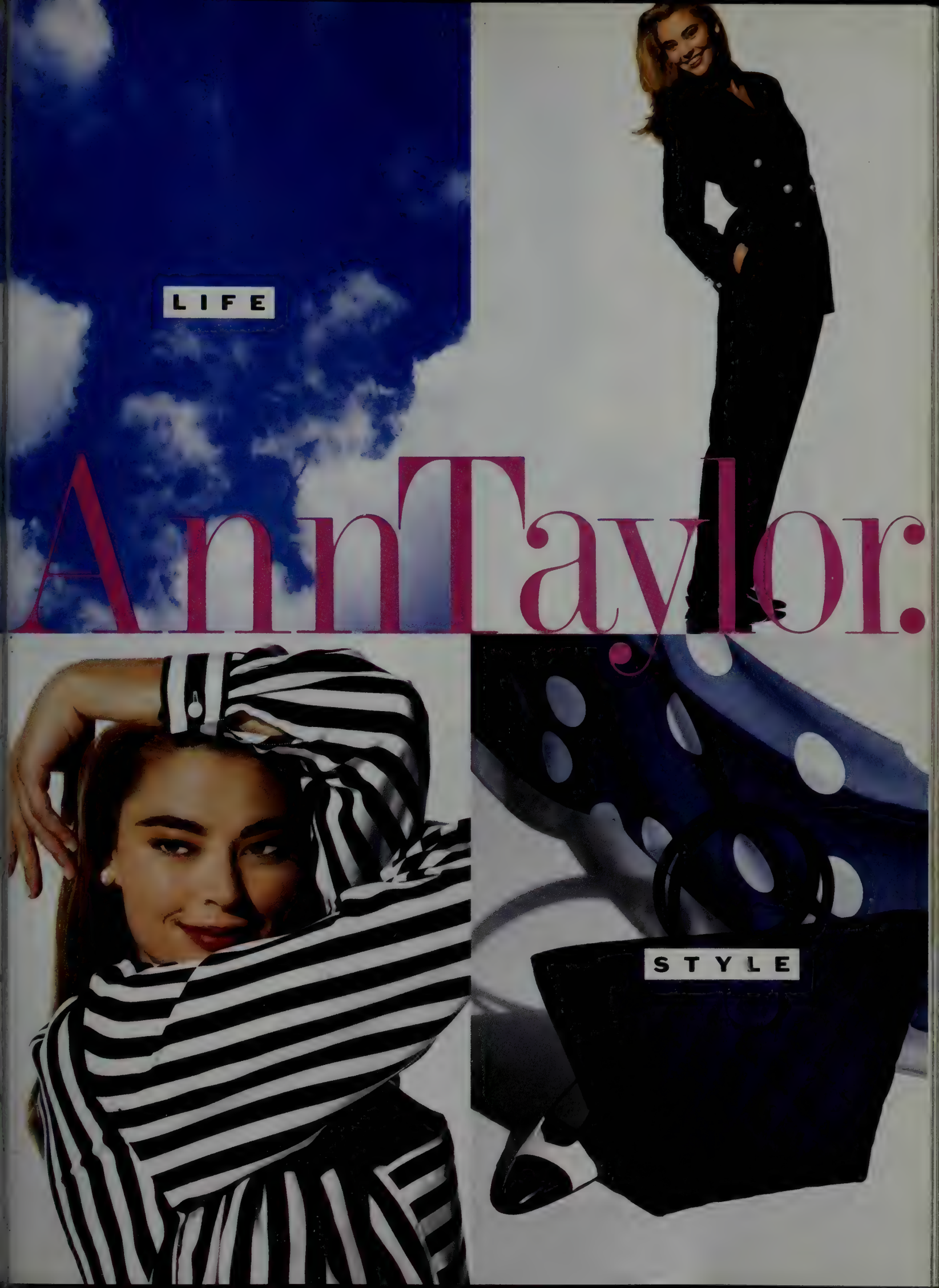
This cultlike fraternity extended to exaggerated nepotism (Swaleh Naqvi is said to have hired more than thirty relatives) and to the choosing of wives for some of its top executives. Abedi was none too pleased with Elyn, Rahman's second wife. Born in the Bronx and educated as a businesswoman and fashion consultant, Elyn Rahman met Masi at a cocktail party in New York in 1983. An attractive thirty-seven-year-old of Italian and Irish parentage, Elyn Rahman says she was always scorned by Abedi. "He did not accept me because I was Catholic and because he had already picked out a Pakistani woman for Masi. To marry a New Yorker from the fashion industry was the worst mistake. Abedi never even spoke to me. He would just acknowledge me from across the room, with a nod."

Staring out at the backyard of her latest temporary safe house, Elyn Rahman suddenly becomes quite agitated about Abedi. "Let me tell you something. He treated people like garbage. He used people and then he trashed them."

It was in 1984, at about the time of Rahman's marriage to Elyn, that the chief financial officer first became suspicious about the multimillion-dollar payments Abedi kept asking him to arrange for a variety of governments.

The top officials at B.C.C.I. were on exceptionally close terms with General Zia of Pakistan. But then, so was the C.I.A. Pakistan's finance minister admitted last summer that branches of B.C.C.I. may have been used to funnel money to Afghan rebels as part of a C.I.A. covert operation. (The C.I.A. has, predictably, declined to comment on any particulars of its relationship with the bank, except to say it both used the bank for fund transfers and filed several hundred reports on criminal activities at the bank.)

But relations between B.C.C.I. and Zia's government went far beyond helping the C.I.A. to help Afghan rebels. In early 1984, Rahman was in B.C.C.I.'s London headquarters when he received a long-distance telephone call from Abedi. "He told me that Pakistan wanted more money from us. We had been giving what I was told were charity payments,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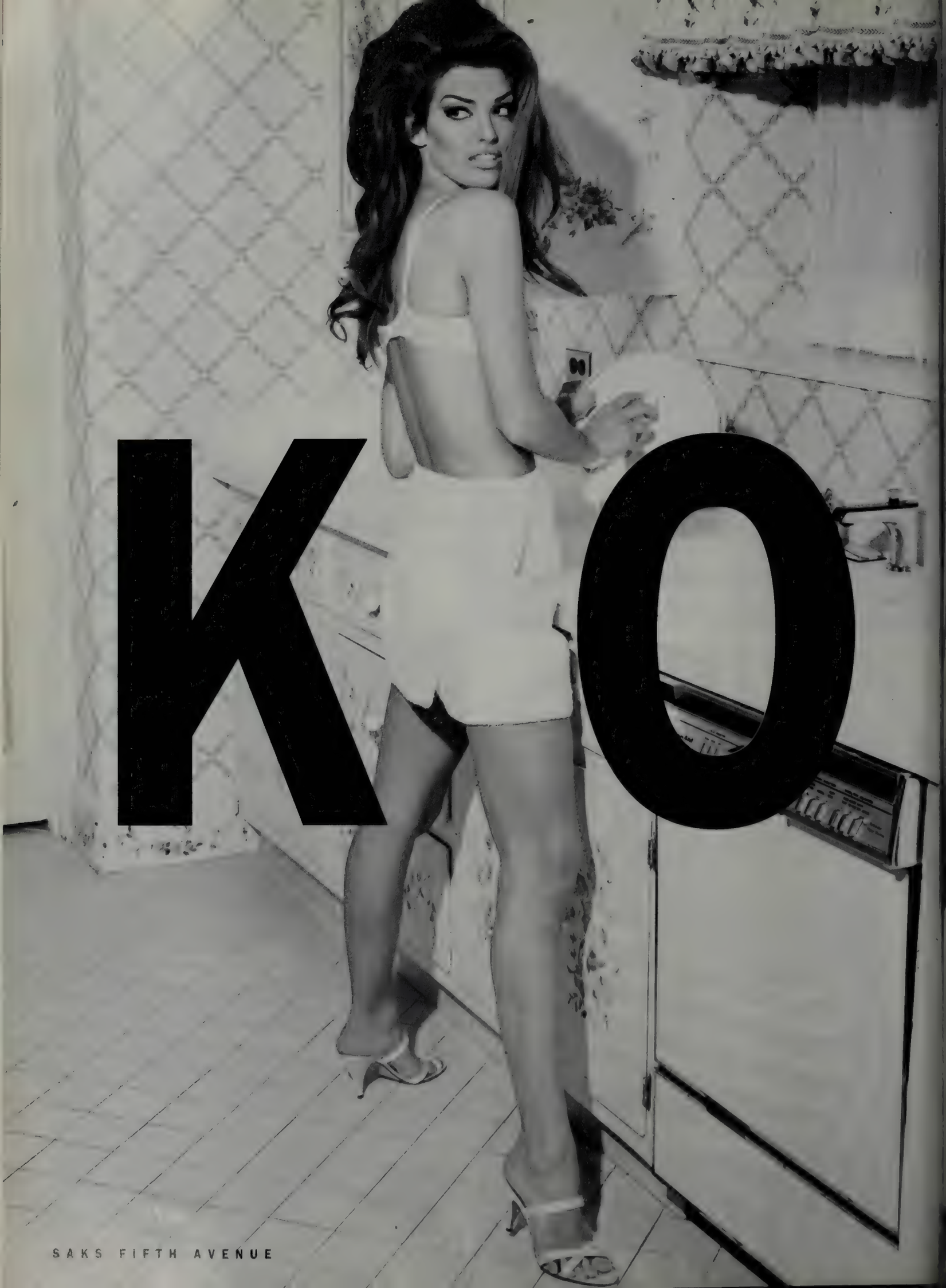
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but they already totaled $20 million that year. Twenty million dollars is a lot of charity for Pakistan, from one bank. And Abedi said I had to find some more. I told him that we had already closed the books for the year, that we could not change the accounts. But he insisted."

Some of the money may indeed have gone to philanthropic causes, but Rahman agrees with Abdur Sakhia, another former top B.C.C.I. official, that B.C.C.I. made payments to relatives of General Zia. The payments, however, took many forms, such as cash, the hiring of relatives, subsidized loans, or other means of buying influence. The same was true of B.C.C.I. payments to the family of the late Indira Gandhi, who received $100,000 herself as one of the first recipients of B.C.C.I.'s annual Third World prize. Other recipients of $100,000 each, says Rahman, included Willy Brandt, the former West German chancellor, and Julius Nyerere, president of Tanzania.

When Rahman refused to reopen B.C.C.I.'s accounts, Abedi demanded to speak with Swaleh Naqvi. Rahman handed over the telephone. "I heard Naqvi telling Abedi, 'Yes, sir, I am sure something can be done, oh yes, Mr. Rahman can do it,' and I became furious. I told Naqvi that the auditors would find out, that the books were closed. He told me he had promised Mr. Abedi it would be done. We eventually found another $2 million for Pakistan."

Rahman says this was not the only instance in which he was asked by Abedi to do things that struck him as irregular. "Mr. Abedi needed me, but he hated my being a conscience to him," says Rahman. "He'd tell me, 'Masi, you shouldn't wait for a heated swimming pool to learn how to swim. It's not a perfect world. Just jump into the dirty pond.' "

Zia's blessing was essential for a number of questionable B.C.C.I. operations that were run from Pakistan. In the case of Panama, it was more a question of the bank's offering itself to Manuel Noriega as a truly full-service bank. B.C.C.I. officials and Noriega stand accused of laundering more than $20 million in alleged drug profits out of Panama.

The full-service bankers of B.C.C.I. certainly didn't sit around in their offices waiting for business to fall into their laps. They courted it actively, and frequently by chumming up to Third World dictators. Rahman remembers one B.C.C.I. colleague who "walked around with bags of money and would buy television sets and VCRs and give them to politicians and clients in Nigeria, Spain, and Panama." In Panama, according to Rahman, B.C.C.I.'s branch manager became so close to the government that he would go jogging each morning with Noriega. (Which was almost a tradition: the B.C.C.I. man had also jogged alongside Noriega's predecessor, General Omar Torrijos.)

"Abedi's philosophy was to cultivate everyone because there was always a payback," says Rahman. "And in the case of Noriega, let's face it—if you are jogging with the president of a country, then you are one up on other bankers in the country. We were not present in Panama to set moral standards for Noriega, but to win his business."

Abedi "was totally power-hungry and he mesmerized everyone. It became like a banking cult."

One man of genuine moral standards who was sucked into the B.C.C.I. machine was former president Jimmy Carter. It is no secret that Carter accepted millions of dollars in donations from the bank to his Global 2000 health-and-education foundation and a $500,000 contribution to the Carter Center, which houses his presidential library. What is less well known is the frequent use Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, made of B.C.C.I.'s slick corporate jet. The Carters trotted the globe with Abedi, from Zimbabwe to China, from Kenya to Britain. And when Abedi could not be there, he sent Naqvi or Rahman in his place.

Rahman's most vivid recollection of what it was like to travel with the Carters was a trip from Kenya to Ghana in 1988. The occasion was a World Health Organization seminar on how to eradicate the guinea worm. It was held in Accra, the capital of Ghana, which gave Rahman the chance to meet Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings, the strongman of Ghana, who also wangled hundreds of thousands of dollars in charitable contributions out of B.C.C.I., according to Rahman.

The bank's corporate jet may not have rivaled Air Force One, but for Jimmy Carter and other occasional passengers—including former British prime minister Lord Callaghan and U.N. Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar—it certainly came in a close second. A converted Boeing 727, the heavily staffed aircraft had a sumptuous office section at the rear, complete with a wood-paneled library, desks, and sofas. The middle of the cabin featured a master bedroom with king-size bed and adjoining bathroom, *en suite*. The front of the plane was made into an elaborate drawing room, with swivel chairs, tables, and couches. There was also a large map of the world on one wall, with blinking red lights indicating each of the 430 B.C.C.I. branches. "It was always lit up like a Christmas tree so guests could see that B.C.C.I. spanned the world."

Carter, says Rahman, was effusive in his praise of Abedi, and he made a point of speaking of the bank "wherever he went." In Ghana, for example, Rahman remembers Carter praising B.C.C.I. during a TV broadcast, in the presence of officials from the U.N., the World Bank, and the government of Ghana. "It was a wonderful endorsement and it certainly helped us to get more business."

Rahman swears, however, that unlike many other beneficiaries of B.C.C.I., Carter never behaved improperly. And one of his most compelling memories is of Carter visiting a child who was being treated for guinea worm. "The guinea worm can be quite long, many inches, and it comes out of the patient's body alive in a process that takes up to seven days. To see this huge worm coming slowly out of a body is almost biblical. It was so horrible to watch that I had to turn away. But President Carter kneeled down and touched the arm of the child, comforting this victim as the worm came out of her body."

Lord Callaghan, known as "Sunny Jim" during his years as the British prime minister (1976–79), did not watch worms coming out of African children. Paid briefly as a consultant, he was one of several British politicians targeted by B.C.C.I. as a man of influence who could be useful to the bank, which at its peak had forty-seven offices in Britain. "He never did anything wrong," says Rahman, "but Lord Callaghan would take us to lunch to meet members of Parliament."

Carter and Callaghan may have been the biggest catches, but many other

prominent politicians, royals, and even sportsmen and entertainers passed by Rahman's desk on the fourth floor of B.C.C.I.'s London offices on their way to lunch with Abedi. "I remember Muhammad Ali coming to B.C.C.I. and telling me he was proud of the bank's work in the Third World. He was such a powerful and tall personality that we all looked up to him, quite literally."

Rahman also has recollections about B.C.C.I.'s secret control of the Washington-based First American Bankshares, the bank that was run until August 1991 by former presidential adviser Clark Clifford and his law partner Robert Altman (whose main claim to fame before the B.C.C.I. scandal broke was that he is the husband of Wonder Woman Lynda Carter). "I met Altman several times at B.C.C.I. annual conferences," says Rahman. "I had lunches and drinks with him in Vienna, Athens, and Luxembourg. I never thought it was illegal; it was generally understood inside the bank that First American was owned by B.C.C.I. Mr. Abedi would always refer to First American as 'our cousins from America.' Altman would tell us how they were proceeding at First American. I personally believe that from the day Abedi locked into Altman and Clifford, he put his cards on the table. I definitely think Altman knew that B.C.C.I. controlled First American." (Clifford and Altman, who are currently under investigation, have vociferously denied knowing about B.C.C.I.'s control.)

In March 1985, B.C.C.I. even went Hollywood, bringing the King and Queen of Thailand to a gala evening in L.A. at which Abedi played the improbable role of master of ceremonies to an audience of B.C.C.I. executives and luminaries that included Henry Kissinger, Yul Brynner, L.A. mayor Tom Bradley, and Javier Pérez de Cuéllar.

For B.C.C.I., the 1980s were the good old days. In March 1990, a partner in Price Waterhouse, the bank's auditing firm, telephoned Rahman at home and said they needed an urgent meeting. "I had a sense this was the beginning of the end," remembers Rahman.

The next day, the auditors informed Rahman they'd found a series of spectacularly irregular transactions that could cost the bank as much as $500 million in losses. "Price Waterhouse said we should go to the regulators, but first it was decided to set up an internal task force to investigate." Rahman, as chief financial officer, was appointed chairman of the task force. A month later, at a special meeting of the B.C.C.I. board, he broke the bad news about the massive fraud. "I remember that Naqvi had tears in his eyes."

(Rahman has charged that Price Waterhouse was negligent in its auditing practices and should have discovered the prodigious fraud years before it did. Price Waterhouse emphatically denies this and has even counterattacked Rahman, saying that his position meant that he "shares management responsibility for internal financial controls." Rahman's riposte: "I'd look forward to meeting them in court.")

A fellow senior executive told Rahman, "I have personally shot two people. I will have no hesitation shooting you if you open your mouth."

Rahman claims that he tried to get his bosses to take action, but that they were more interested in covering up and getting Sheikh Zayed to simply bail them out (which he eventually did, to the tune of almost $1 billion). "When we discovered the true situation, I named fifteen executives who should be fired immediately—but they were kept on instead. They are all now in jail in Abu Dhabi," says Rahman with grim satisfaction.

In June 1990, Rahman says, he had a showdown with Naqvi and other B.C.C.I. executives (Abedi by now was seriously ill back in Pakistan, having suffered the second of two heart attacks). "I told them they still had crooks working for them, that they had dismissed the wrong people. They told me it was not my affair. I said that I might even go to court to help defend the honest men they had fired. That was a mistake," says Rahman, glancing quickly out the window at his backyard, where his children are filling bright pumpkin-colored plastic bags with autumn leaves.

It was at that moment in the summer of 1990 that he felt he had made himself a target. He says this impression was reinforced when a fellow senior executive told him, "Masi, let me warn you. I come from a family in Punjab and I have personally shot two people. I will have no hesitation shooting you if you open your mouth."

Rahman says he was offered $40,000 to leave the bank and keep quiet. "That was ridiculous," he says. "My secretary got $30,000 in severance when she left." Instead, he threatened to sue for wrongful dismissal and asked for $3 million. He was to have been joined in his suit by other ex–B.C.C.I. executives, and the legal wrangling was still under way when the bank was shut down in July 1991.

Rahman's Christmas present a year ago was a warning from a B.C.C.I. colleague that he had become "a marked man." The mysterious phone calls and death threats escalated last spring as Rahman made plans to testify before grand juries in New York and Washington. Elyn Rahman says the situation became unbearable; she was hospitalized recently for stress and is now under the care of a therapist. The Rahmans' six-year-old son did not understand what was happening, but he became so nervous that he took to wetting his bed and was treated by a psychologist.

As for Masihur Rahman, he sits in a little study in his suburban purgatory which he has fashioned into a replica of his bank office in London. "I have tried to preserve the décor and the dignity of my London office," explains Rahman. "I was with that bank for seventeen years and it is hard to find myself in the middle of nowhere." Though he is determined to testify against his former employers in court, he admits to bouts of depression. "This experience has made me very fatalistic," he says, removing his glasses and pinching the bridge of his nose. "It has made me doubt everything. A lot of people are hoping I will just go away. I have no social life. I have no friends here. I am living in the backwoods. It gives me peace, but not much else. So I lock myself in this room and I reread my B.C.C.I. papers. This will never happen again, that a $20 billion bank will just vanish. It is a shattered dream."

And then, picking up a color snapshot of six B.C.C.I. executives, he touches the photograph, as though it might come alive. "Look at this. There I am. In the picture. I am one of the six people named in 1989 to remake the bank, and now I am the only one of these left who is not indicted or in jail." □

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(continued)

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Helen Mirren as Chief Inspector Tennison: a test spin of a mind working on all cylinders.

THE SWINGING DETECTIVES

The prime-time crime beat takes a hip turn with Britain's "Prime Suspect" and America's *Law & Order*

BY JAMES WOLCOTT

Pop entertainment has become fixated on the steel web of the psychotic mind—on its flashy sense of entitlement. In *The Silence of the Lambs,* Anthony Hopkins expresses his superiority to the dumb human meat he devours with Shakespearean glee, syllabizing like mad. Nick Nolte and Jessica Lange are mere stick people in *Cape Fear* compared with Robert De Niro, a white-trash Rasputin straight from the tattoo parlor. He wears his Antichrist credentials on his skin like a road map to hell. (The designer names in Bret Easton Ellis's *American Psycho* also functioned as tattoos.) At a time when bubbling evil creates so many lava veins on-screen, it's useful to be reminded that a rational mind has its own power-sway. A cool brain can stem the bloody tide.

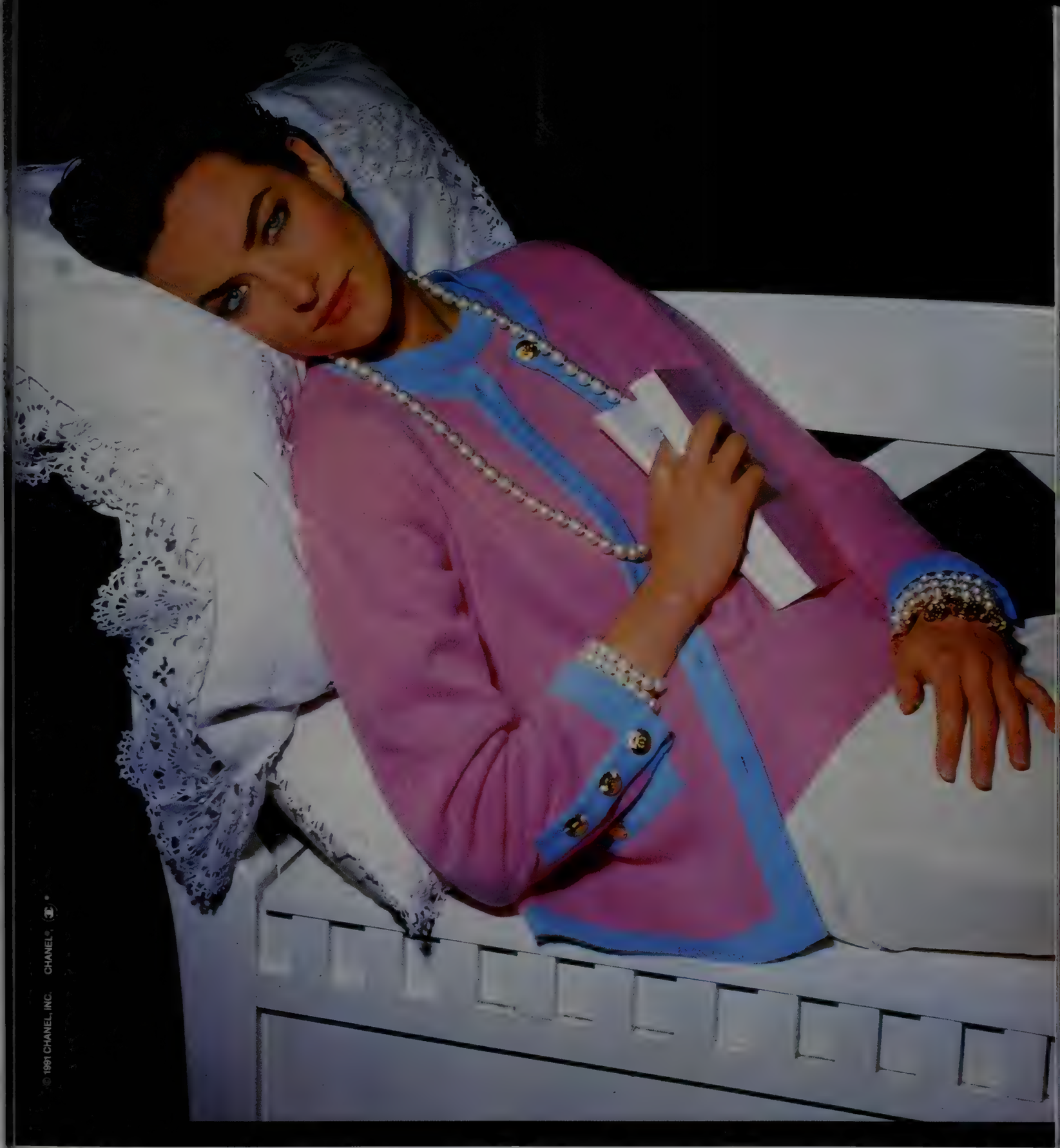
For a test spin of a mind working on all cylinders, it's hard to outdo "Prime Suspect," a three-part PBS *Mystery!* presentation beginning in the U.S. on January 23. An English export directed by Christopher Menaul and written by Lynda La Plante, "Prime Suspect" attempts to flush out a serial killer who strings up his victims like sides of beef. What makes it more than a police procedural is its exposed network of sexual hostilities. All those nerves Anita Hill touched in her harassment testimony are laid out like trip wires. "Prime Suspect" isn't a feminist tract, but it is a feminist triumph. The crime field now has a new phenom: as Chief Inspector Jane Tennison, Helen Mirren not only plays a heroine, she gives a heroic performance. She spares nothing, no one, not even herself.

The irony is that Mirren is best known for playing strapless Eurotrash, slouching leftovers from *la dolce vita*. She was a gangster's moll in *The Long Good Friday*, a bird of prey in Peter Greenaway's *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover,* a succubus in *The Comfort of Strangers*. For this project, Mirren told me, she had to hit the set cold. "I literally finished in Italy at four o'clock, where I was filming *Where Angels Fear to Tread,* flew to England, had my hair chopped off, and started 'Prime Suspect' the next morning." Her characterization has the same shorn, fast, adaptive spirit. When a male inspector dies of a heart attack during the investigation of a prostitute's rape-murder (Forensics: "I reckon she's got semen in virtually every orifice"), Mirren's Tennison lobbies for the case. The only woman of senior status in the department, she's tired of being a desk jockey. She wants a juicy corpse to juggle. This homicide is her opportunity to prove herself to "the lads," the young men on the force who after a long day of lounging around the office retire to a long night of lounging around the pub. She's approved for the assignment only after a superior pays her the ultimate accolade. With a purr he says she has "balls."

Once she assumes command of the murder squad, however, she meets nothing but obstruction—a solid mass of smug male inertia. She's like a substitute teacher in a classroom full of instigators. Each day she faces a chorus of smirks. With mock deference the men call her "ma'am," not that they mind their manners. When she slips in the mud, no one offers assistance. Crucial evidence is suppressed. A countdown to her dismissal commences. A woman I know who has directed documentaries for the BBC says that the cops in "Prime Suspect" remind her of all-male film crews—slow-moving, muttering, a collective mule to motivate. (And it was Norman Mailer who noted the resemblance between film crews and off-duty cops—"the same heavy meat on the shoulders, same bellies oiled on beer.")

Without preaching, "Prime Suspect" does the best job I've seen of showing how men belittle women in a small multitude of ways, how we use sidelong looks and inside humor to screen them out of the action. The derision directed at Tennison should be familiar to any

JOHN TIMBERS



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woman in an office, factory, bar. Female officers learn to develop rhino skin. When Mirren was researching her role, she learned that the one absolute rule among them was "Never cry." Because once they do, the men will say, See—such *sensitive* creatures. "*Men* are allowed to cry," says Mirren. But the women must be double-sealed. This stoicism has a price. Any woman who shuts her tap too tight may be accused of being a dried-up drudge, even by other women. The nastiest comment in "Prime Suspect" comes from a part-time beautician (spooky Zoë Wanamaker), who asks Tennison with disdain, "Do you use a moisturizer?" Because she so blatantly doesn't.

As Mirren told me, "This isn't a role for Melanie Griffith"—for any softy shrouding herself in mist. The right angularity is required. The honor badge of Mirren's performance is that she isn't afraid of looking dehydrated, dark-circled, and undone as her character gets in deep. La Plante's script affords her the same pride, impatience, and pungency of expression. ("It's a piece of piss," she says of a surveillance assignment.) How welcome this is. On-screen obsession in women is often emotionalism run amok—permanent PMS. Tennison outthinks her opposition. She's tickled by her own intelligence, conducting discussions of possible scenarios by waving her cigarette like a baton. There's a marvelous scene of her addressing the troops in front of a batch of victim photos, eating a bag of crisps. As she hits her mental stride, the lads lose some of the lead in their drawers. They hop to it. I asked Mirren, who has lived in Los Angeles for six years with the director Taylor Hackford, if she enjoyed ordering around a roomful of men. "I did. I absolutely loved it." It shows. As Tennison acquires the lads' allegiance, she takes on the tawny glow of a lioness.

A lioness stalking a mouse. The prime suspect of the title is a salesman named George Marlow (John Bowe), who betrays none of the dank basement squalor of a sex killer. He's no Hannibal Lecter spellbinder. He has puppy-dog eyes and a hurt, pleading sputter. He's kind to his dear old mum, who wears a wig over her hairless head. He feels persecuted, perhaps with cause. "I want him dragged out of bed, I want the shit scared out of him," Tennison tells her live-in lover (Tom Wilkinson). What if you're wrong? he asks. "I'm not," she snaps. The police take such bossy pleasure in busting into Marlow's flat and hustling him downstairs in front of his nosy neighbors that you begin to sympathize with him in his humiliation.

The mystery is solved in a wind sprint of manic euphoria. As a team of undercover cops tails the murderer to a garage, the camera becomes a foot soldier in a relay race of radio messages and sudden pans. When the cops converge, it's like a sheaf of arrows aimed at a single heart. After the arrest, the police move to comb the suspect's car. Flashlight beams prowl the dripping dark of the garage. "Oh, my God," says Tennison. Mounted on the wall is a pair of manacles, with dried blood winging from the outline of a body. It looks like the site of a crucifixion. The suspense continues up until the final surprise, which leaves the courtroom gasping.

The mystery is solved in a wind sprint of euphoria. When the cops converge on the murderer, it's like a sheaf of arrows aimed at a heart.

A wowser on English television, where it captured almost three-quarters of the viewing audience, "Prime Suspect" has spawned a sequel, shooting this month in London with Mirren once again going without moisturizer. Will American audiences be as enthralled? It's true that PBS watchers tend to prefer their English sleuths cozy and droll, like Miss Marple or Leo McKern's Rumpole (whose face belongs on a tankard). The England of "Prime Suspect" is no theme park of Edwardiana. It's drab, overcast, clannish, isolated. The excitement of "Prime Suspect" comes from stepping off the tourist bus and running smack into the real funk. And from seeing Mirren cut through the funk like a dagger.

Stateside, the best regular drama pounding the beat is NBC's *Law & Order*. Created by Dick Wolf (who saw action with *Hill Street Blues* and *Miami Vice*), this series is also a procedural trying to bore a clean hole through chaos. Nearly every story begins with a body bag. A child's skeleton is discovered behind a brick wall. An ex–football player is turned into road pizza by a runaway driver. Lumbering onto the scene to study the chalk outlines are the detectives, played by Paul Sorvino and Christopher Noth. After much footwork they present their findings to the prosecutors, played by Richard Brooks, Michael Moriarty, and Steven Hill. The first half of the show is a criminal investigation; the second half is the subsequent trial.

Sounds very nuts-and-bolts, but *Law & Order* doesn't have the flash-card simplistics of *Dragnet* ("Coffee, Joe?" "No, thanks." "Sure?" [Heavy nod]) or the reflexive rat-a-tat of David Mamet's *Homicide*, in which the dialogue seemed to have been banged out on a manual typewriter bolted to the set of *The Front Page*. Filmed in New York, *Law & Order* is more porous. Milky traffic flows past the windows of deluxe suites, corner diners, crack dens. With their easy sense of entrée, the detectives are free to float through class stratifications, ethnic divides. Where the England of "Prime Suspect" hides behind shutters, *Law & Order*'s New York seems spread-eagled—and squawking. Each bit of information comes wrapped in attitude.

Although the cases on *Law & Order* are Torn from Today's Headlines, the treatment isn't tabloid-smudged. An episode on date-rape contained no lurid recreations. Instead, what one remembered was the smeary mouth of the victim, who looked as if she had spent her entire life wiping away unwanted kisses. And there's as little psychological delving as need be. Like any first-rate *policier*, it prizes the tangible; information, not speculation. Except for the downcast D.A. played by Brooks, who seems to need a hug, the cast carts out the data with dispatch. As the detectives, Sorvino pooches up his face and Noth uses his eyebrows as levers. Once a space oddity, Michael Moriarty has returned from the moon and found his stroke as a courtroom mouthpiece. No one opens a manila folder with more persuasive presence. He's learned to underplay. And as the wise Druid in the district attorney's office, Steven Hill peels away the nonessentials of a case with the zip of a Saul Bellow character.

Like "Prime Suspect," *Law & Order* doesn't try to shave I.Q. points off the viewer. It believes that knowledge can be the highest form of caring, that the heart of darkness can be apprehended. This belief is so rare these days it almost makes a big strong man like me want to cry. □

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A ROYAL CHAPPAQUIDDICK

Charges of cover-up reigned at the long-awaited trial of Victor Emmanuel, pretender to the Italian throne, for a mysterious shooting on the Mediterranean

BY BOB COLACELLO

The hardwood bench of the defendant's box in the Felony Court of Paris is about as far as you can get from a throne. But that's where the would-be King of Italy, Prince Victor Emmanuel of Savoy, fifty-four, found himself in November, accused of assault and battery leading to unintentional death, and illegal possession of a military weapon; he faced up to fifteen years in jail. The four-day trial was the bitter climax of a strange and noxious drama that began in 1978, on the French Mediterranean island of Cavallo, with a freak shooting incident involving the prince and a pack of young Roman yachtsmen which took the life of an innocent nineteen-year-old German boy named Dirk Hamer. The thirteen-year delay was not the only extraordinary thing about this trial; it was the first time since Louis XVI and the French Revolution that a "prince of the blood" stood before a "popular jury"—nine citizens overseen by a presiding judge and two magistrates. He was brought into and out of the defendant's box in handcuffs by two gendarmes with pistols in holsters. In court, His Royal Highness Victor Emmanuel Albert Charles Theodore Humbert Boniface Amadeus Damian Bernard Januarius Maria, Duke of Savoy, Prince of Naples, and, by the grace of God and hereditary right, head of the royal House of Savoy, was called "Monsieur de Savoie."

Amazingly, the trial was nearly aborted on the second day, when the guards in the prison where the prince was being held overnight went on strike and refused to let anyone out; riot police had to charge a picket line to rescue him the next morning. It was nearly derailed again when one of the magistrates collapsed, and was revived by a medical expert who happened to be testifying at that moment. That was also the morning Victor Emmanuel's wife, Princess Marina, a former world waterskiing champion and heiress to a Swiss cookie fortune, almost fainted from the tension and was helped out of the courtroom by their only child, the teenage Prince Emmanuel Philibert.

Every day, the visitors' gallery was studded with Victor Emmanuel's royal relations: his elder sister, Princess Maria Pia, with her consort, Prince Michael of Bourbon-Parma; one of his younger sisters, Princess Maria Gabriella; his nephew Prince Serge of Yugoslavia; his cousin Prince Michael of Greece and Denmark. Huddled together in their understated cashmere capes and loden coats, they were in stark contrast to Dirk Hamer's family—the father, Geerd Hamer; the brother, Bernd; the younger sister, Gunhild; the older sister, Birgit—who looked like Lutheran clerics or soldiers in their severe black suits and stiff white shirts. Victor Emmanuel avoided looking at them, particularly when the wild-eyed father interrupted the proceedings to blurt out, in German, sensational allegations against him and his longtime business patron, the late Shah of Iran.

Three of the most powerful old-boy stars of the French bar, sporting Legions of Honor and Orders of Merit, defended the prince against one of the rare female criminal lawyers in the country, teetering on red high heels. The press box overflowed with reporters from Italy, France, Germany, and Switzerland, where the prince has his main residence in exile. Over everything and everyone hung history, in the form of a sweeping mural of seventeenth-century French nobles, bishops, and knights paying homage to the boy king Louis XIII, an ancestor of the defendant. It seemed a fitting symbol of the ambiguous attitude toward monarchy today in what is supposedly the most republican state in Europe.

Italy's would-be royal family, Prince Victor Emmanuel, Princess Marina, and their son, Prince Emmanuel Philibert, in exile in Switzerland.

For months before, high-society dinner parties in Paris and Rome and Geneva and Venice had been abuzz with anticipation. For *le gratin*, Victor Emmanuel's trial was the irresistible finale to Europe's longest-running Chinese whisper—and a royal embarrassment. And for them it all came down to

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genes. In the words of one Parisian title, "He's got that Wittelsbach blood on his mother's side. Ludwig of Bavaria was a Wittelsbach. They suddenly go completely *wild*."

The trial came at a rather inconvenient time for European royalty, at the end of a year that had seen a startling re-emergence of the monarchist movement. As one Romanov relation put it, "The day Leningrad became St. Petersburg again, every pretender in Europe took out his scepter and polished it." In October, Crown Prince Alexander of Yugoslavia made the front page of the *International Herald Tribune*, kissing his ancestral soil upon landing in Belgrade, where 70,000 Serbs marched for the return of the Karageorgević dynasty. A few days before Victor Emmanuel's trial, Grand Duke Vladimir Romanov flew to Russia at the invitation of Boris Yeltsin. Among those with the highest hopes of regaining their thrones is the exiled King Simeon II of Bulgaria, a close cousin of Victor Emmanuel. Two other cousins: King Baudouin of Belgium and King Juan Carlos of Spain.

"The *real* royal title is 'cousin,' " notes a regular on the blue-blood circuit. "That's how they greet each other—it's always '*mon cher cousin*'—even when they have the most *tenuous* connection." At the trial, the Hamer family made the same point in their own way: they handed out mimeographed pamphlets accusing "the royal Mafia of Europe of corrupting the legal process."

The timing was most disastrous for Victor Emmanuel himself, because the Italian parliament was under considerable pressure to repeal the postwar constitutional article forbidding male members of the Savoy family from setting foot on Italian soil. Many political observers believe this ban would have been lifted long ago if it were not for this much-delayed trial. Ironically, the thirteen-year postponement of justice, for whatever reasons, had turned Cavallo into a curse hanging over Victor Emmanuel's head, like some kind of royal Chappaquiddick.

The victim, Dirk Hamer, and his sister Birgit, *above*, a few days before he was shot. *Left*, doctor-playboy Nicky Pende on Corsica for questioning, 1978.

Thirteen years is a very long time to remember exactly what happened in the middle of the night in the middle of the summer in the middle of the Mediterranean. This much is *not* in dispute:

On the morning of August 17, 1978, two thirty-eight-foot Magnum Marine speedboats, called the *Coke* and the *Master*, and a smaller Chris-Craft cabin cruiser, called the *Mapagià*, left Porto Rotondo, Sardinia, for Cavallo, just off the southern tip of Corsica, about an hour and a half away. A former nudist colony that had been developed a few years before by the Paris nightclub owner Jean Castel, Cavallo was still unspoiled and extremely exclusive. There were only about a dozen holiday villas, one of which belonged to Prince Victor Emmanuel, who was then a representative for the Italian helicopter company Agusta.

All three boats were owned by rich young Italians from Rome, and among their mostly Italian guests were a beautiful German girl named Birgit Hamer and her equally beautiful brother, Dirk, whose mother had rented a house on Sardinia that summer. Birgit was twenty-one, a former Miss Germany vaguely pursuing a movie career in Italy. Dirk had just graduated from the German School in Rome, where he had been a track star. Birgit had accepted the invitation on the spur of the moment and asked to bring her brother along.

They arrived in Cavallo around midday and moored the three boats side by side, next to Victor Emmanuel's yacht, the *Aniram*. That evening they went to the only restaurant on the island, Les Pêcheurs, where Victor Emmanuel and Marina were also dining, with about a dozen friends, including Sergio Leone, the spaghetti-Western king. When Dirk saw how expensive the menu was, he left without eating and returned to the *Mapagià* to sleep. His sister and most of the rest of the group returned to the boats sometime after midnight.

When Victor Emmanuel left the restaurant sometime around two A.M., he noticed that one of his two Zodiacs, the small motorized rubber dinghies used to go back and forth between his yacht and the beach, was tied to the back of the *Coke*. He drove to his hilltop villa, picked up his M1 carbine, a semi-automatic weapon used by the American forces in World War II, and went out to the *Coke* on his other Zodiac. Somehow an oxygen tank fell onto the *Coke*'s rear deck, and its valve opened; the escaping gas made a hissing sound. This awakened Nicola "Nicky" Pende, a golden-haired Roman who had recently been divorced from Italian movie star Stefania Sandrelli. He came out of the cabin. There was a confrontation between Pende and Victor Emmanuel, during which two shots were fired from the prince's carbine. The two men struggled and fell into the water. Nicky Pende dove under the *Coke* and swam under the other boats. Victor Emmanuel swam back to shore, pushing one of his dinghies with his carbine in it. Marina was waiting for him in their jeep; they turned the headlights onto the boats. On the *Mapagià*, which was separated from the *Coke* by the *Master*, Dirk Hamer had been hit by a bullet in the groin and was bleeding.

Great confusion ensued. At least one SOS flare was set off from another boat in the bay, called the *Blue Dolphin*. There were radio calls to the police station in Bonifacio, the closest port on Corsica, requesting a helicopter; they had two, but one couldn't fly at night and the other was broken. About an hour later, the only doctor on Cavallo appeared. About an hour after that, the *Coke* took off with Dirk, Birgit, and Nicky Pende. It took about forty-five minutes to get to Bonifacio, where an ambulance was waiting to transport Dirk, who was hemorrhaging internally, to the clinic in Porto-Vecchio, another forty-five minutes up the coast. Sometime after seven in the morning, a French army surgeon operated to close Dirk Hamer's torn femoral artery.

Gendarmes from Bonifacio were already on Cavallo, questioning witnesses, including Victor Emmanuel, who admitted firing two shots. That afternoon they arrested him on assault and

PHOTOGRAPH, TOP, BY DANIEL SIMON

"My horoscope: 'Things will blossom for you today.' Uncanny."

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REAL LIVE LEGS

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weapons charges. He was brought before the Court of Examination in Ajaccio, the capital of Southern Corsica, and interrogated by Judge Hubert Breton, as was Nicky Pende. Judge Breton ordered the immediate incarceration of Victor Emmanuel, pending trial. This is normal legal procedure in France when there is a strong possibility of tampering with evidence or flight.

Dirk Hamer in the hospital in Marseilles, where his leg was amputated.

Meanwhile, Dirk Hamer's leg had turned gangrenous, and early on the morning following his operation, he was flown to a larger hospital, in Marseilles. His leg was amputated at mid-thigh; the day after that, another amputation was done, to the hip. Ten days later, at the request of his father, a physician, he was suddenly transferred to a private clinic in Heidelberg. On December 7, 1978, 111 days after he had been shot, Dirk Hamer died of kidney failure. His parents decided to bury him in Rome, and his funeral became the occasion for a great uproar against Victor Emmanuel in the Italian press. By that time, the prince had been released on bail, after fifty days in jail.

That's what everyone agrees on, but thirteen years have produced an almost impenetrable maze of conflicting memories and disputed interpretations, lurid accusations and bitter denials, all kinds of rumors, innuendos, and red herrings, and so many contradictory versions of events as to make *Rashomon* seem like a straightforward linear narrative.

One side charged that only two nights before the Cavallo incident Victor Emmanuel had fired a gun at his sister-in-law as a joke. The other side claimed that liquor had been stolen from Victor Emmanuel's yacht on the afternoon before the incident. A major conflict concerned the 500,000 French francs that Princess Marina paid to the Hamer family while her husband was still in jail and Dirk was still alive. She claimed it was "a humanitarian gesture." The Hamers insisted it was "an admission of responsibility." The Savoys alleged that after Dirk's death the Hamers demanded 10 million deutsche marks to drop the case. The Hamers alleged that the Savoys offered this sum as a bribe.

Nicky Pende and Victor Emmanuel even disagreed on who was wearing—or, more precisely, *not* wearing—what that night. According to Pende, he was "completely nude, like I sleep in summer," and therefore defenseless. According to Victor Emmanuel, Pende was wearing jeans and *he* was nude, having lost his shorts at some point during the scuffle. It was also unclear whether it was the prince's shorts or his T-shirt that bore the legend KING KONG.

A few weeks before the trial, I interviewed Victor Emmanuel in Geneva and Nicky Pende in Rome. Both interviews had the air of a dress rehearsal; both men seemed to have memorized their lines a long time ago. And, indeed, they repeated these lines in the courtroom. But things also slipped out that were character-revealing and that never made it into the court record.

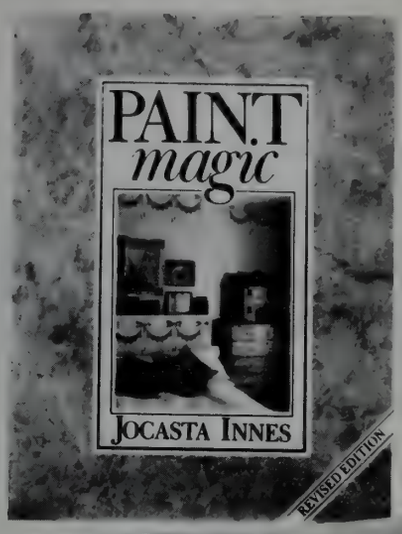
Nicky Pende in his mid-forties is still golden-haired. He arrived at my hotel looking as if he had just stepped off a speedboat from the Costa Smeralda, in a brass-buttoned blazer, faded jeans, a bright-green Lacoste, and beat-up black espadrilles. He said his story was "very simple." He had lingered at Les Pêcheurs longer than the rest of his group, "because I saw a girl I knew there, at the bar." When the restaurant closed at about two, he returned to the *Coke* on the catamaran of "a Swiss guy, I think." Victor Emmanuel's Zodiac was already tied to the back of the *Coke*, having been *borrowed* by other people in the group. "It's so *obvious:* if you want to *steal* a Zodiac, you don't leave it out all night next to your boat."

About half an hour after he went to bed, he heard a noise and went up onto the rear deck to investigate. "I saw the oxygen tank in the middle of the deck, and when I went to take it, I saw out of the corner of my eye the movement of somebody outside the boat. He was standing in the Zodiac, and he crouched when he realized I saw him. I said, 'Who are you?' He stood up again, and since there was a very clear moon, I recognized him—Savoia. I was astonished. I wondered why he was there. I was without words. And Savoia started saying, 'Now, you blond man, you pay for it.' And other things, which I didn't understand what he was referring to, but he was menacing me. And I noticed in his right hand an M1 carbine. So I said, 'Keep calm.' And I looked at the eye of the gun and he was holding it at the level of my chest, one and a half meters from me. I instinctively, like a leopard, leapt down, and at the same moment I felt the heat of two bullets passing over my head. I could feel the air moving over my head. At that moment I stood up, and he tried to hit my head with the carbine, but I moved and he hit my shoulder. I was afraid to run away, afraid of being shot in the back. I decided to overwhelm him and make him fall in the water. So I jumped at him—sprung at him—and we both fell in the water. . . . There was a campaign to create the impression that a fight between two idiots caused the death of an innocent boy. But there was only one idiot—the one with the gun."

Victor Emmanuel talked to me on a Sunday afternoon, driving back to Geneva from the medieval church of Saint Maurice, in a part of Switzerland once ruled by the Savoys. A special Mass had been said there for the newly inducted cavaliers of the 419-year-old royal Order of Saints Maurice and Lazarus. The prince, like sixteen Dukes of Savoy before him, is its grand master. "It was the highest honor you could get when the king was in power," an Italian aristocrat explained. "But now it's like getting a medal from Farah Diba."

He was at the wheel of his brand-new Toyota Previa van, which he said would be perfect for weekend commutes between his house overlooking Lake Geneva and his chalet in Gstaad this winter. (He also has an apartment in New York as well as the Cavallo villa.) Well over six feet tall, he was wearing a brass-buttoned blazer, a striped button-down shirt, a foulard tie, gray gabardines, and black loafers. On his right wrist was a pair of copper bracelets, souvenirs of an African photo safari with his son; on his left, a string bracelet of the sort surfers

DANIEL SIMON



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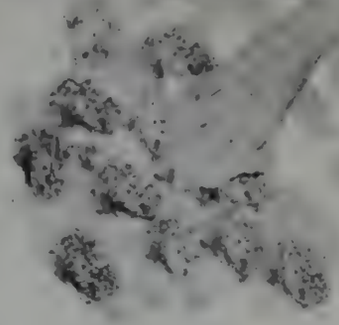

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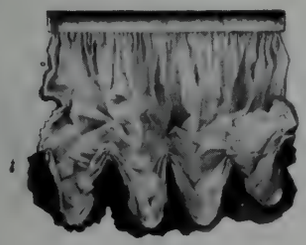

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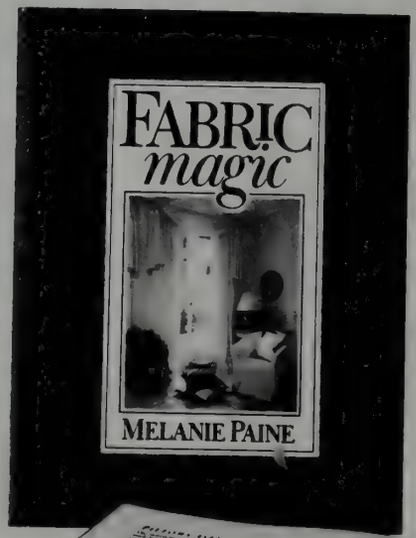

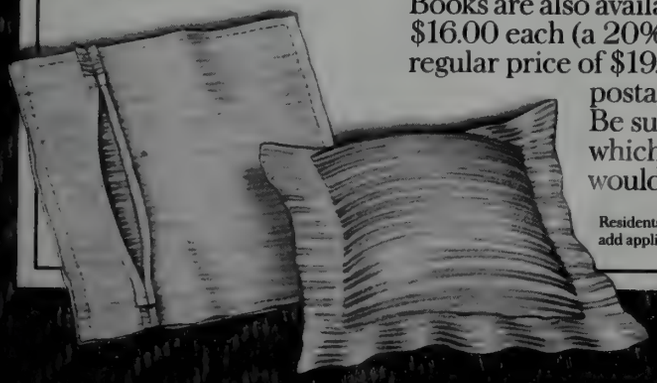

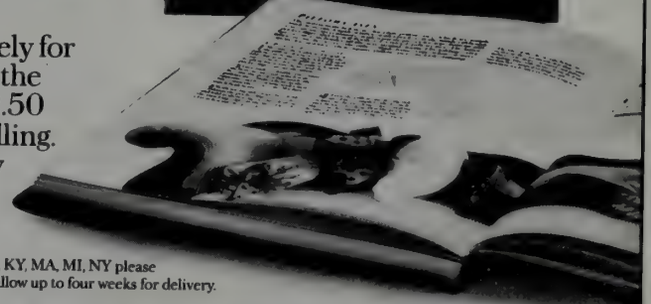

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wear and a Cartier watch. When we passed a small airfield, he said that was where he practices acrobatic piloting.

Though he has the perfect, even humble manners of royalty, he also has the apparent arrogance—his friends say it is actually naïveté—of someone who has never had to worry about how cold or

Victor Emmanuel with his gun collection in Geneva in pre-Cavallo days

haughty his choice of words can sometimes seem. When he noticed his Zodiac tied to the *Coke*, he said, he went home and got his M1, "which everybody on Corsica has to go shooting wild boar."

A carbine, he explained, is actually "less dangerous than a pistol," because it can be seen from a distance and its long barrel makes it less likely that an accidental shot would hit someone in a struggle. While untying his dinghy, he continued, he knocked over an oxygen tank. "So Mr. Pende came out, saw the tank, and started to shout at me.... 'You are a shitty king,' et cetera. And I said, 'Why did you take my boat?' And I shot one shot in the air. He jumped on me, and—falling down with him—the other shot went off. And we went under the water. And that was all.... He said I wanted to kill him. I could have killed him easily. I had thirty-one bullets. I am one of the best shots here at the shooting range. I go hunting every year everywhere. So I know. I had no intention of killing him.... I wanted to *scare* him.

"Now, when I went out and talked to the police [the next morning], I admitted it. I said, 'I shot two bullets; perhaps it is mine.' *Perhaps*. But at the time I never knew there were three more shots other than mine.... It is not me.... I am absolutely not guilty."

There *was* another gun: a Smith & Wesson .38 revolver that belonged to Vittorio Guglielmi, the owner of the *Mapagià*, the boat that Dirk Hamer was on. But whether it was fired that night is the most disputed aspect of the entire case. Victor Emmanuel's lawyers have long argued that there were other shots, that the Guglielmi gun was missing two bullets, and that it had been recently fired when found the next morning, but they never publicly presented an alternative scenario as to how Dirk Hamer was shot, if not by the prince's stray bullet. One defense lawyer told me, "It's not our job to prove someone else guilty, only to prove the prince *not* guilty." According to the Parisian title, who is a close friend of the Savoy family, "the version I was told was that when it all started happening the German boy, who was sleeping on the deck [of the *Mapagià*], got scared and crawled through a window into the cabin. One of the Italian boys panicked—he thought it was Victor Emmanuel because he was tall and blond—and shot at him."

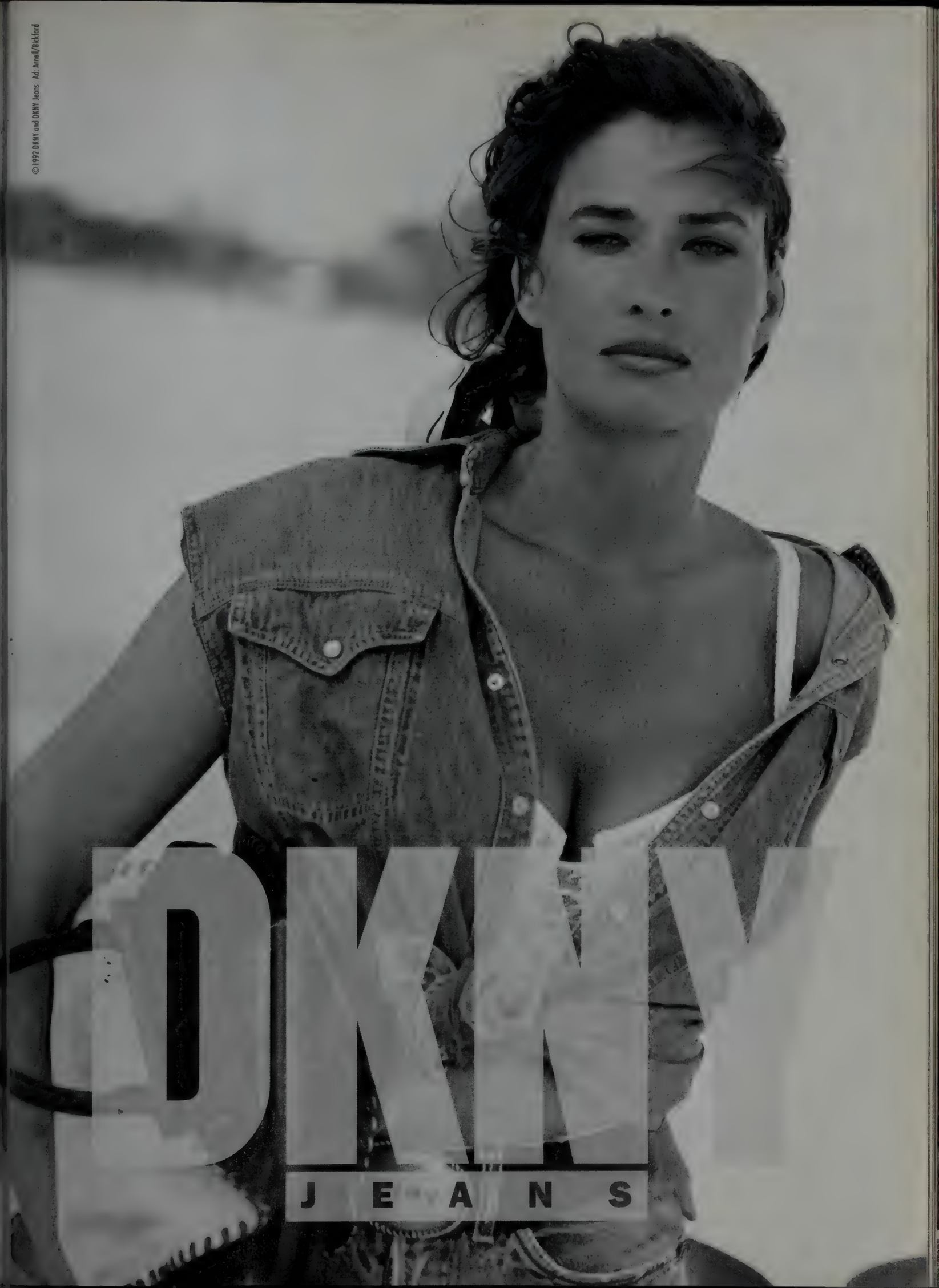
But two Italians who were on the *Mapagià*, Francesco Ago and Umberto Ercole, firmly denied that Guglielmi's gun was fired that night by him or anyone else. In separate interviews, they told me almost identical stories. Both Ago, who is now a lawyer, and Ercole, now a marketing consultant, said they were sleeping in the front cabin with their girlfriends. Ago was awakened by the hissing oxygen tank; Ercole, by "two shots." They immediately jumped up and went out to the middle cabin, or dinette area, where they saw Dirk Hamer clutching his bleeding groin and moaning, in one bed, and Vittorio Guglielmi, covered in bits of glass and just waking up, in the other. The window over Guglielmi's bed—which was on the side of the *Mapagià* closest to the *Master* and the *Coke*—had two or three ragged holes in it. Nicky Pende climbed aboard and told them that Victor Emmanuel had shot at him. "We were very scared," Ercole said, "because the lights of the prince's jeep were on us." According to Ercole and Pende, Vittorio Guglielmi then said, "Let's defend ourselves," and reached in a drawer for his gun. "Don't touch it, or we will become the guilty ones," Pende told me he hollered. Ercole told me that he stopped Guglielmi from taking the gun out of the drawer. "This was two or three minutes after the boy was shot," Ercole said. "I can swear that no one shot except Victor Emmanuel."

More than fifteen witnesses gave statements to the gendarmes on Cavallo, and I interviewed several others. The overwhelming majority said they heard two or three shots. A few said they heard four. The third and/or fourth noises could have been the red SOS flares—some saw or heard one, some saw or heard two—that Massimo Tononi, the owner of the *Blue Dolphin*, said he "set off thirty seconds after I heard the second shot, to see what was happening and to attract the attention of the guard of the island."

The private guard of Cavallo, Michel Levaufre, was the only witness who ever said that he heard more than four shots. It was also Levaufre who found the Guglielmi gun on the *Mapagià*, in an early-morning search he made while the Italians were being questioned on the beach by the gendarmes. He said that the revolver, which holds six bullets, had only four bullets in it and that it had been recently fired, because it smelled of gunpowder. But a gendarme who also examined it that morning testified that it did *not* smell of gunpowder.

In any case, the gendarmes let Vittorio Guglielmi, his gun, and his boat sail off to Sardinia later that same afternoon. They also let the *Master* leave. As the *Coke* had already left for Corsica, there was no way to make an accurate reconstruction. The official ballistics test was also maddeningly inconclusive: only a fragment of a bullet was found in Dirk Hamer's abdomen, and it was impossible to tell if it was from the carbine or the revolver.

Vittorio Guglielmi declined to send his revolver to France for an examination, and has never once in thirteen years of investigation appeared at hearings in Corsica or Paris. Indeed, if Victor Emmanuel's lawyers had called some *film noir* casting agency, they could not have come up with a better choice for the Mystery Man with the Other Gun than the Marchese Vittorio Guglielmi. In the mid-eighties, *Gente* magazine ran a photograph of Guglielmi brandishing a pistol at a paparazzo who caught him out with married starlet Antonella Interlenghi. In 1985 he was jailed on "financial irregularity" charges involving the sale of a villa to Mafia underboss Domenico Balducci, but he was soon acquitted. When I tried to contact him at the Palazzo Guglielmi in Rome, I was told by a servant that he was "shooting in Poland," and I was then berated by his highborn Brazilian wife, who finally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screamed his lawyer's name into the phone at me. The lawyer, Claudio Isgro, did not return my calls.

Friends say that these scandals have made Guglielmi press-shy, but they have a hard time explaining why he has not made any attempt to defend himself from the insinuations of Victor Emmanuel's lawyers during the course of the French investigation. To complicate matters further, Umberto Ercole told me, "Vittorio Guglielmi was very friendly with Victor Emmanuel. They went shooting in England or Scotland before this [Cavallo] happened." He didn't know if they'd seen each other since Cavallo, but Ercole saw Guglielmi last summer, and he didn't want to talk about Cavallo. "He never wants to talk about it. I don't understand his behavior."

"The day Leningrad became St. Petersburg again, every pretender in Europe took out his scepter and polished it."

Several witnesses said that Victor Emmanuel knew not only Vittorio Guglielmi but also other people from the three boats—including the owners of the *Coke*, Paulo Poma and his wife, a Torlonia princess—and that he had greeted them in the restaurant that night. But Victor Emmanuel has repeatedly insisted that he didn't know any of them. "I never met those people," he told me. "I never spoke with them. Nothing. Nothing. Nothing." He said that he was actually suspicious of such a large group of what his wife called "strange, noisy Italians," because Aldo Moro, the Italian political leader, had been murdered by the Red Brigades three months earlier, and his son, Emmanuel Philibert, then six, had been under constant police protection in Geneva after kidnapping threats that spring.

Curiously, one of the rare points that Victor Emmanuel and Nicky Pende agreed on in their interviews with me was that there had not been any sort of argument between them personally or between the two groups in the restaurant on the eve of the shooting. Perhaps neither wanted to give himself a motive for having attacked the other.

The proprietor of Les Pêcheurs, Dominique Pugliese, told *Oggi* journalist Pino Abrile in 1985, "The prince and the Roman physician Nicky Pende had a fight with words." Other sources reported that there was a "violent discussion" between Nicky Pende and the waiter about the bill and that Victor Emmanuel "intervened to calm the altercation, saying, 'Signori, I beg of you, we are all Italians, let's not make a spectacle.' " Several sources told me that the Italians made mocking remarks about Victor Emmanuel's royal pretensions. "They were teasing him, making fun of his royalty," said Sergio Pellecchi, a longtime crony of Victor Emmanuel's from Lausanne. Umberto Ercole admitted that the Italians "were saying things like 'Eh, Prince, what are you doing here? Are you still the prince?' "

When I asked young Emmanuel Philibert if his father angered easily or had a violent side, he said he didn't, but then added, "He doesn't like people making a fool of him, you know, saying things like 'Oh, you dirty prince,' like I think happened in Cavallo."

"You have to remember that when he was born in Naples in 1937 they shot cannons and it was a national holiday," said Italian novelist Alain Elkann, who has been a close friend of Victor Emmanuel's for more than twenty years. "He was brought up to be a king. His grandfather was a king, his father was a king, and his mother was the daughter of a king."

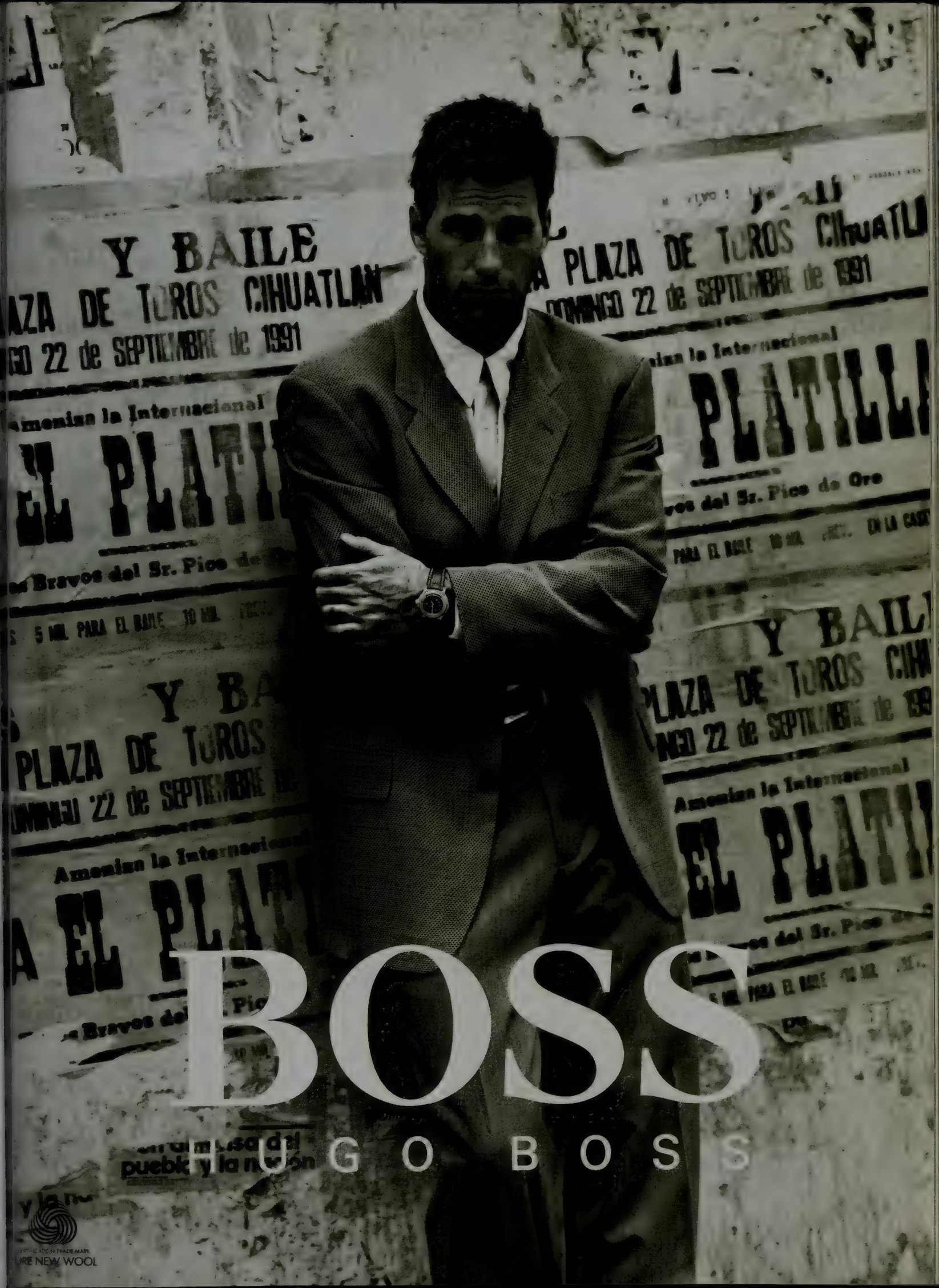
His grandfather was King Victor Emmanuel III, who ruled Italy from 1900 to 1946, when he abdicated under pressure from the Allies because of his long association with Mussolini. His father was King Umberto II, who sat on the throne for one month in 1946—"the King of May," they called him—until the Italian people rejected the monarchy by a slim margin in a referendum and the royal family went into exile in Portugal. His mother, Queen Marie José, now eighty-five, is the daughter of King Albert I of Belgium and Princess Elizabeth of Bavaria, one of those weird Wittelsbachs.

"My husband's life is a tragedy," Princess Marina told me at the Valentino ball in Rome last June, which she had to attend alone. "A tragedy of history." Three dark themes appear to hang over it: rejection by Italians, fear of assassination and kidnapping—his great-grandfather King Umberto I was assassinated in 1900, and his father was almost assassinated in 1930—and an avid interest in arms.

A key period is 1943 to 1948, when Victor Emmanuel was between the ages of six and eleven. In 1943, Victor Emmanuel III had Mussolini arrested, and switched sides—historically, a Savoy specialty—from the Axis to the Allies. The Germans occupied Rome, and the royal family fled to Switzerland, where little Victor Emmanuel spent almost two years in a remote mountain village, surrounded by Swiss soldiers, because, he said, "Hitler had an idea to take us hostage—mostly myself. Me." His father's sister Princess Mafalda of Hesse was seized in Germany, and died in the concentration camp at Buchenwald. Then came the brief return to Italy in 1946, the rejection in the referendum, exile in Portugal, and another slap from the Italians in 1948, when the new constitution banned the Savoys from Italy. "All the time we thought, Surely next year they will let us back," Victor Emmanuel told me. "Like tourists, or I don't know what."

In 1947, Victor Emmanuel moved to Geneva with his mother. His three sisters, Maria Pia, Maria Gabriella, and Maria Beatrice, stayed in Cascais, Portugal, with their father, whom family friends universally praised for his "refinement," "elegance," and "kindness." According to a close family friend, "He went on leading his own separate, but extremely discreet, life." The Italian tabloids were less diplomatic: over the years they've published the purported love letters of Umberto to an officer he served with in the Italian army as a youth and an interview with the son of a Capri fisherman who said his father was set up in the restaurant business by Umberto. In fact, the Italian press seems to revel in ridiculing the former royal family. Decades later, they still cackle about Maria Pia's leaving her husband, Prince Alexander of Yugoslavia, for Prince Michael of Bourbon-Parma; about Maria Gabriella's turning down the Shah of Iran to marry real-estate developer Robert de Balkany instead, and then leaving him for Stavros Niarchos; about Maria Beatrice's two suicide attempts, one over a matador and one over a student. Perhaps the unkindest cuts of all are the constant references to the Agnellis as "the real royal family of Italy."

Victor Emmanuel has also given the Italian press plenty to go on about. In 1957, he slipped into Italy to catch a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striptease act in Milan; the stripper told the papers that the prince taught her "marksmanship" and she taught him the mambo. In 1966 he made headlines when he flew his Piper Aztec over a monarchist rally in Naples on the twentieth anniversary of the Italian republic and dropped "Long Live the King!"

One side charged that only two nights before the Cavallo incident Victor Emmanuel had fired a gun at his sister-in-law as a joke.

leaflets. The Parisian title remembers Victor Emmanuel and his buddy Crown Prince Charlie of Burundi in Gstaad, "shooting at lamps late at night . . . when they had too much to drink." An older friend of his parents' said, "He's always been shooting, left and right, even in the garden of his mother's place near Geneva."

Friends say that he's never outgrown his fondness for arms, and point to the sixty-foot shooting range in the basement of his Geneva house and his collection of more than three hundred weapons, from historical hunting guns that belonged to his ancestors to more up-to-date gifts from such friends as the late Philippine president Ferdinand Marcos. "He also has one of the biggest seashell collections in the world, and he cleans them himself," said the Parisian title, who used the same adjective that many other friends of his had used: "childish."

In 1971, after an eleven-year courtship and despite his father's disapproval, he married Marina Doria, a former girlfriend of German playboy Günther Sachs. The Teheran ceremony was organized by the Shah of Iran. "She is the solid element in Victor's life," said the Parisian title. "In the end even Umberto came to see that." An Italian countess adds, "Without her he's lost. She handles everything and helps him in business."

From 1967 to 1985, his principal business was selling helicopters for Italy's Agusta family, which had the Italian license for Bell and Sikorsky. His principal client was the Shah of Iran, who, it was said, "liked having the Savoys next to him because their thousand-year-old dynasty lent a little luster to the Pahlavis' two generations." An aircraft-industry expert estimated that Victor Emmanuel sold more than seventy-five transport helicopters, at about $1 million each, to the Iranian military in the mid-seventies; the standard commission would be 5 percent. Victor Emmanuel told me that he also put together the $820 million deal to build the Iranian port of Bandar 'Abbās. One insider said, "The Shah always asked Italians—whoever they were, even the Italian government—to give commissions to Victor Emmanuel."

"Kings help kings," Alain Elkann said. Others say that kings also helped Victor Emmanuel stay out of criminal court for thirteen years. "I think it was postponed in the first place because King Umberto asked President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing if it could be pushed back on account of his great ill health," stated an intermediary who was close to both. He added, "It was done extremely privately, of course." Another royal insider said that when Victor Emmanuel was detained in Ajaccio his sister Maria Gabriella "went to their cousin King Baudouin of Belgium for help. He said, 'I'll pray for him.' So *typique* of the Belgians. But the King of Spain, Juan Carlos, was *fantastique*. He called Valéry, and you know how Valéry loves the kings."

According to the Parisian title, "We were all trying to get it postponed or thrown out. . . . It became a political thing. The others—the Corsicans, the leftists, the opposition, shall we say—were really going to try to get him, so we did fight to postpone and postpone, because generally when things are postponed, they are dropped."

The French judicial system, with its tier upon tier of criminal courts—Examination, Accusation, Appeal, Petty, Misdemeanor, and Felony—seems to facilitate delay, politically inspired or not. At almost every step along the way, points of law can be appealed to the Court of Cassation, which can take a year or longer to reach a decision and then send the case back down to a lower court. "It's easy to postpone things in France," one business consultant said, "especially if you have a good lawyer."

Victor Emmanuel had the best, Maître Paul Lombard, a silver-maned cross between Edward Bennett Williams and Roy Cohn, a star criminal lawyer and a backstage political power who has been used by the estates of several major artists, including Picasso and Chagall, to work out complicated inheritance settlements. Born in Marseilles, he was the protégé of Gaston Deferre, the longtime Socialist mayor of that Mediterranean port. In 1981 the rightist Giscard d'Estaing was defeated, and the new, Socialist president, François Mitterrand, appointed one of Lombard's closest allies, Robert Badinter, as minister of justice. In one of the many strange twists in this case, Badinter was the original lawyer for Dirk Hamer's family. (In France the victim's relatives may take part in the prosecution.) Badinter has since been appointed president of the Constitutional Court, which is similar to the U.S. Supreme Court.

And so the case of Cavallo went on and on: in 1980, the Chamber of Accusation on Corsica ordered Victor Emmanuel to stand trial at the Felony Court in Ajaccio, but Lombard asked for additional medical information; his request was denied by the Court of Appeals on Corsica; he appealed to the Court of Cassation in Paris, which also denied his request, but it was now 1982. After that the case went into a legal limbo the French call "neutral" while Lombard and the courts fought over whether to allow a 150-page private ballistics report by Professor Pechenard, a leading ballistics expert in France, into the official record. The report basically claimed that the lead fragment taken from Dirk Hamer's body could not have come from Victor Emmanuel's carbine, because his bullets were copper-coated.

In 1983, Geerd Hamer, the victim's father, wrote an open letter to President Mitterrand, asking him "to see to it that French justice acts in the same way towards a rich murderer as it would towards a poor murderer." He has also implied in *Oggi* that Lombard and Badinter have a history of working together, suggesting that they were somehow behind the presidential pardon of German auto heiress "Putzi" von Opel after she had served little more than a year for smuggling a ton and a half of hashish into France. Such wild charges have given him the reputation of a conspiracy-theory crank. His most sensational allegation is that Victor Emmanuel is the head of the P-2 Masonic lodge, the shadowy right-wing cabal exposed during the Banco Ambrosiano scandal in the early eighties. He told me that he suspected that the bullet fragment had been switched on its way from Heidelberg to Paris by order of the late Bavarian leader Franz Josef Strauss, who he said was also in the P-2. Victor Emmanuel's Ger-

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man lawyer, Hansjoachim Gaub, calls all of this "complete fantasy."

In 1985, Dirk Hamer's mother died of a heart attack after a long bout with cancer. Shortly after that, Princess Marina was in Rome at a Mass for the restoration of the Italian monarchy at San Lorenzo in Lucina, the most social church

"He said I wanted to kill him. I could have killed him easily. I had no intention of killing him. I wanted to *scare* him."

in the Italian capital. Just after Monsignor Piero Pintus, the priest who has proposed Princess Grace of Monaco for sainthood, shouted "Long live the king!," Birgit Hamer marched down the aisle to the front pew and screamed at the would-be Queen of Italy, "My mother died of a broken heart because your husband, the killer of my brother, is still free! You have blood on your hands! The House of Savoy are assassins!"

In 1988, Birgit Hamer hired a new lawyer, a youngish woman named Sabine Paugam, who had written a very successful book, *Crimes of Passion*. A year later, the Chamber of Accusation ordered Victor Emmanuel to stand trial in the Felony Court of Ajaccio. Paul Lombard appealed to the Court of Cassation, on the grounds that the case should be tried in the Misdemeanor Court, because it was an accident, not a crime. It took another year for the Court of Cassation to uphold the decision of the lower court and to order the trial, but in Paris, not on Corsica. In interviews he gave at the time, Victor Emmanuel said that he'd "rather be tried by computer" than by a Paris jury, because "the Paris courts have their roots in the Revolution of 1789." He also declared, "Believe this Savoy: I will not be guillotined."

In social circles, it was whispered that he didn't need to worry: his cousin King Juan Carlos had supposedly telephoned President Mitterrand on his behalf. It was also noted that Robert Mitterrand, the president's businessman brother, "was telling people at dinner parties around town that he had read the dossier and Victor Emmanuel wasn't really at fault." And that one of Robert Mitterrand's sons is married to Sabine Paugam's sister. Perhaps that explains Geerd Hamer's refusal to work with his daughter's lawyer.

At times in court, it seemed as if royalty itself were on trial. Sabine Paugam used the phrase "if the prince were not a prince" at least a dozen times in her closing speech, and insisted that his title was the real reason behind the thirteen-year delay. Paul Lombard's closing plea reached a grandiloquent crescendo when he read a letter from Queen Marie José imploring the jury "to restore the honor of my son and my country." Predictably, *La Stampa* of Turin later commented, "Fortunately, the honor of Italy rests elsewhere."

Sabine Paugam, however, proved to be no match for the princely defense team, which also included the illustrious professor of criminal law Jacques Léauté and Bâtonnier Georges Flécheux, head of the Paris bar association; it was like three tigers against a kitten. She produced no new evidence, no convincing arguments, and, most important, very few witnesses. Francesco Ago came to court on the first day of the trial, but left for Rome when he wasn't called that afternoon; she wasn't even aware that he had gone, and looked foolish calling him to the stand two days later. Four other witnesses from Italy, including Umberto Ercole, were willing to testify, but Paugam told me with a shrug that the presiding judge refused to accept witnesses who hadn't given statements to the gendarmes on Cavallo in 1978.

The defense, on the other hand, had an array of impressive medical, ballistics, and character witnesses, including Edmonde Charles-Roux, the intellectual doyenne of French high society, and an ancient Latin instructor from Le Rosey, Victor Emmanuel's Swiss boarding school. Princess Marina, in a dark suit and no jewelry other than her wedding band, was unquestionably the star witness. When Paugam brought up the shooting gallery people said Victor Emmanuel had in his basement, the princess snapped imperiously, "Madam, people say my house has five swimming pools and six cinemas. I don't listen to what people say, and I certainly don't repeat it, unlike you."

Birgit Hamer, still beautiful and wearing no makeup, followed the princess to the witness stand and movingly conveyed what it was like to go off sailing for a day of fun and come back without a brother. She stunned the courtroom when she testified that she had been awakened by a man shouting, "Who stole my dinghy? *Italiani di merda!* I am going to kill you all!"

Victor Emmanuel was a surprisingly effective witness on the stand, all humble manners, no arrogant phrasing. His last words to the jury were "As a father, I understand the suffering of Dirk Hamer's family."

Nicky Pende, on the other hand, was a disaster, raising his left hand instead of his right when he was sworn in, undermined when Lombard produced a document stating that Pende was not registered with the Italian medical association. His appearance, however, wasn't the only Ionesco moment in a trial the London *Times* said "veered between high tragedy and French farce." At one point, Lombard, Léauté, and Flécheux were on their feet shouting, "Guglielmi is Mafia!" while Paugam shouted back, "The prince is P-2!" Vittorio Guglielmi was not there to defend himself; his silence remains one of the great mysteries of the case.

So in the end it came down to the word of a "prince" against that of a "playboy," or the word of a "doctor" against that of a "helicopter salesman," depending on your point of view and whom you believed. The government prosecutor recommended a guilty verdict and five years in jail, with the possibility of a full or partial suspended sentence. The jury deliberated for two hours and nine minutes and found Victor Emmanuel not guilty of assault and battery, not guilty of involuntary homicide, but guilty of illegal weapons possession, and gave him a six-month suspended sentence. As the victorious Victor Emmanuel left the courthouse, surrounded by gendarmes, paparazzi, and TV crews, Gunhild Hamer screamed, "*Re di merda!* King of shit!"

Meanwhile, *le gratin* was already on the line to Milan and Rome and Geneva. In New York, Valentino was so eager to know the verdict that he had Countess Georgina Brandolini call Paris in the middle of a luncheon party.

In the next day's papers, Victor Emmanuel said that now that he is "without stain" he will petition the Human Rights Court in Strasbourg for the right to return to his country. Just before the trial, the Italian parliament had put off consideration of the repeal of the Savoy ban yet again. The Hamer family is also planning an appearance at the court in Strasbourg, to appeal the verdict. The curse of Cavallo goes on and on. □

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Nora's aura: Ephron on the home front in New York City.

NORA'S ARC

Writer Nora Ephron has always survived hard-luck stories by turning them into hits. And her directorial debut, *This Is My Life*, looks like a three-hankie classic

BY LESLIE BENNETTS

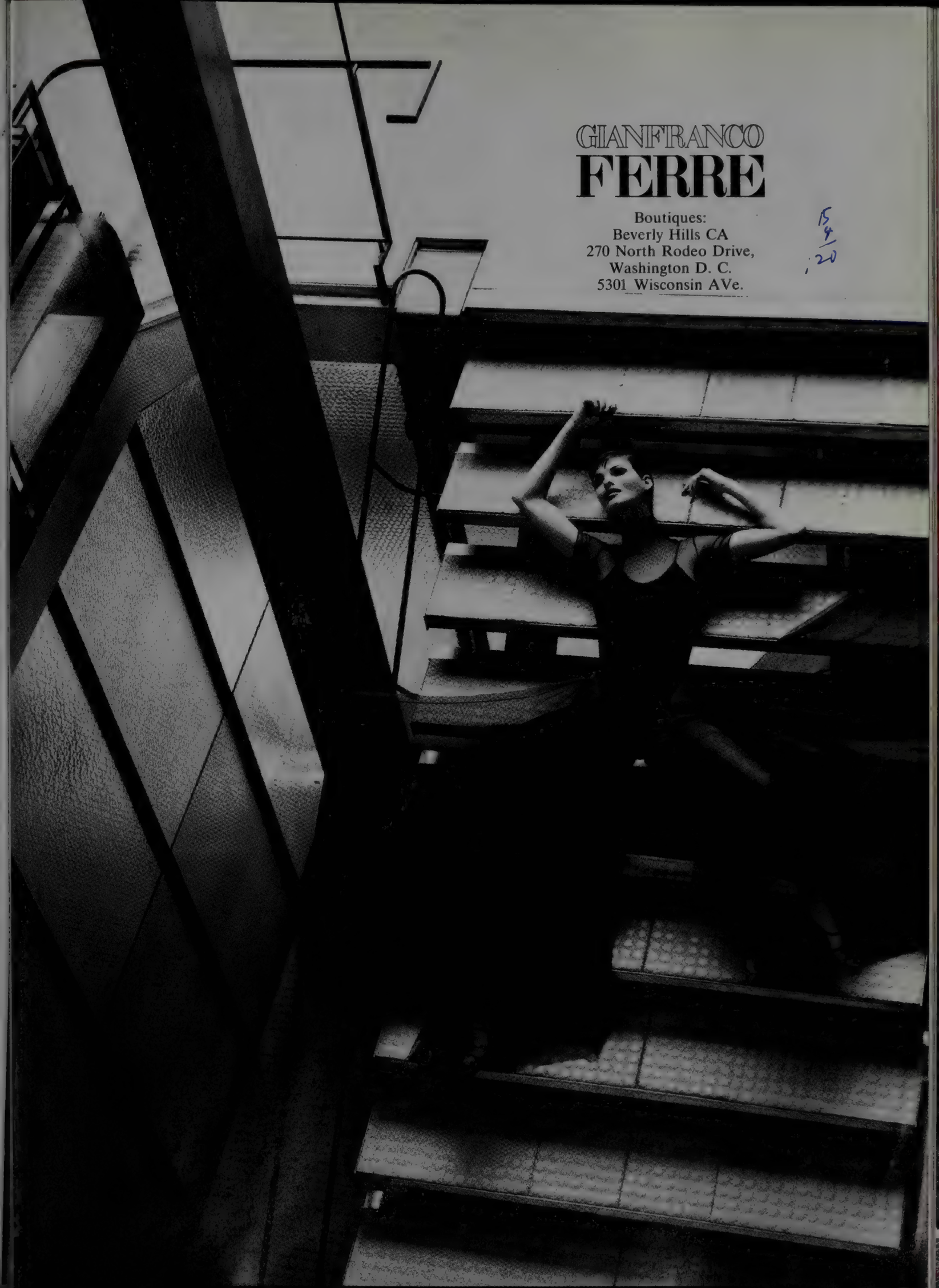
She sits quietly in the dark, her eyes never leaving the movie screen as she sips jasmine tea made from the cache of tea bags she always carries with her, lest she be forced to drink some inferior brew that doesn't satisfy her uncompromising palate. Nora Ephron has always been someone who not only knows exactly what she likes but arranges, with precision and forethought, to get it. Up on the screen in front of her, a long black limousine is cruising through the neon-choked streets of Las Vegas; as it passes a giant marquee advertising "Dottie Ingels," a little girl pops through the car's open sunroof, throws up her arms, and yells, "That's my mom!" Over and over again, a technician sitting at a vast electronic console runs the same piece of film footage, trying out different versions of the snippet of dialogue and fiddling with sound levels as everyone in the room listens intently. Ephron has been closeted in this midtown Manhattan mixing studio for weeks, and at times the process is excruciatingly tedious; it takes nearly two hours to decide these three words of dialogue. She is having the time of her life.

"The hugest smile I ever saw was when Nora said 'Action!' for the first time," says Julie Kavner, the star of Ephron's new movie, *This Is My Life*. "It was a smile of complete pleasure. She loves to be able to control things. Francis Coppola said that being a director is one of the last dictatorships you can have in an increasingly democratic world. Without being a dictator in the evil sense of the word, Nora is, in a positive sense. I think Nora was born to direct."

Indeed, in many ways Ephron has been aiming for this moment ever since her childhood in Beverly Hills as the daughter of two successful screenwriters. Her own time has finally arrived. At the age of fifty, after a dozen years of writing screenplays for other people and picking up a couple of Academy Award nominations along the way, Ephron not only wrote *This Is My Life* with her sister Delia but directed it as well. Based on a Meg Wolitzer novel called *This Is Your Life*, the story follows the sudden rise to fame of Dottie Ingels, a single mother who works in the cosmetics department at Macy's on Queens Boulevard but who is determined to make it as a stand-up comedian, despite the conflict between the demands of her career and the needs of her two daughters. Ephron may be new to the director's chair, but she was hardly reticent about her claim to it in this case. "When Lynda Obst sent me the book, I knew I absolutely could direct this, and, further, that I was the only person who could direct it—that there was no one working as a director who was going to make a movie about being a single mom with two kids and the pull between kids and career," says Ephron, whose friend Obst produced the film. "Who's going to make this movie? I was without any question the logical person to make it. I grew up with a mother who worked. It's a movie about sisters, and about using your life as part of your work, and what the effect is on your family when you do that. On every single level it was my movie."

It is, to an eerie extent, her life as well. Dottie Ingels horrifies her sixteen-year-old by embroidering on a real-life mother-daughter conversation to get a

FIROOZ ZAHEDI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Nick of time: Ephron, *near right*, with then husband Carl Bernstein in 1977, and today with husband Nick Pileggi.

laugh on a television talk show—but Ephron was already providing her parents with material by the time she was two years old, when they wrote a play about her. They managed to get a Broadway hit out of Nora's college career when they used her letters home from Wellesley as the basis for another play. (They never asked her permission, but despite many years of therapy she claims she didn't mind a bit.) As a magazine writer, Nora became famous for writing about everything from how inadequate her own breasts were to the progress of a case of crabs passed around a circle of licit and illicit lovers, certain of whom were so clearly based on the author's intimates as to cause them considerable distress. However, Ephron's propensity for cannibalizing her own life didn't become a cause célèbre until the spectacular demise of her second marriage, to Carl Bernstein. At first their union seemed a coup for them both: Watergate hero marries New York sophisticate. For a while they were the toast of the Eastern shuttle and the highest-profile media couple around, except perhaps for their very good friends Ben Bradlee and Sally Quinn. Then Carl launched a torrid affair with the wife of the British ambassador while his own wife was pregnant with their second child, a son born two months premature after Carl informed Nora that he was madly in love with his inamorata. Although she was devastated, Ephron didn't grow up in Hollywood for nothing. No matter what happens, her mother was fond of saying, "It's all copy." Nora promptly called the columnist Liz Smith to announce that she and Carl were through, and went on to turn her marital debacle into a best-seller, a Mike Nichols movie, and a lifelong albatross around the neck of the cad who was foolish enough to betray her. Dottie Ingels may be a minnow in the school of confessional revelations, but Nora Ephron is the great white shark.

In an odd twist, the plot of her new movie parallels what happened to Ephron while making it; this time around, life imitated art. As Dottie Ingels, who has devoted herself to her kids for sixteen years, embarks upon her intoxicating ascent, she is away from home more and more; her children are furious, and their resentment finally explodes in a family free-for-all. "This is the first time I have been away from you in your entire life!" Dottie wails. "Don't I have a turn? Isn't it ever O.K. for me to have a life?" If the problems presented by Dottie's heady new opportunities weren't drawn directly from Ephron's experience, they certainly anticipated it. For the last dozen years, despite her increasingly high-powered movie career, she remained a notably conventional mom, working in a little office behind her bedroom and retiring to the kitchen to start making dinner when her kids came home from school. Last spring, however, she spent ten weeks on location in Toronto shooting *This Is My Life*. Her sons, who are now twelve and thirteen, visited on weekends and made guest appearances in the movie dressed up as trees quoting T. S. Eliot in a school play. "I'm very wary of talking about my kids, because I do feel it's their life," Ephron says carefully. "But they were quite shocked that I was going off to do this movie. I thought I was giving my sons the experience of having a working mother, but on some level they had a very traditional mom. I'm not going to say I was June Cleaver; obviously I was divorced. But for most of their lives, I have been home. All this stuff about quality time and how kids are happy if their mother is happy—that's all nonsense. They just want you to be there. When you're a working mother, basically everything that happens that's good news for you is bad news for your kids."

On its deepest levels, the movie is about Ephron and her greatest strength—her ability to take whatever cards life deals out and turn them into a winning hand.

There is more than a hint of defensiveness in Ephron's account of her decision, as if she has rehearsed the litany of good reasons a hundred times to placate her own conscience before reciting them for someone else. "The kids were eleven and twelve before I went away, and it's not as though I went to Australia," she says a bit plaintively. While she was gone, the boys spent time with both their father, whom they see regularly, and stepfather. "I was an hour's plane ride away, and they had the ability to come whenever they wanted." She sighs. "It all worked out all right, and we'll find out someday whether I did something unspeakable to them."

According to her ex-husband, she already has; after the publication of *Heartburn*, her autobiographical novel, Bernstein spent years in court wrangling over Ephron's right to make it into a movie. He has always preferred to characterize this battle as a defense of the rights of his children against exploitation by their predatory mother. However, his chief concern seemed to be how he himself was portrayed on-screen; he maintained he was worried about how his children would see him when they grew up. Because the divorce settlement was tied to the acrimonious dispute over Ephron's screenplay, it took more than five years to work it all out, and the movie was severely compromised in the process. Bernstein later boasted that he accomplished his objective, which was to ensure that, despite the box-office power of Jack Nicholson and Meryl Streep, *Heartburn* "sank like a stone." His crusade has also had an enduring impact on Ephron's work: she is legally enjoined by the terms of her divorce

PHOTOGRAPHS: LEFT, BY RON GALELLA; RIGHT, BY ALBERT FERREIRA

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settlement with Bernstein from using anything about their life together or the children as material in her work.

If Ephron has been restrained from using the specifics of her own family life to fuel her writing, she has certainly succeeded in finding the universal resonance in the story of one frumpy Jewish hausfrau from Queens. Some critics will undoubtedly hail the ending of *This Is My Life* as heartwarming, while others will dismiss it as sentimental, but it is hard to imagine a working mother who won't identify with Dottie's dilemma; I personally cried off all my eye makeup. However, the movie doesn't pretend to offer any pat solution on how to balance the conflicts between career and kids. "There is no answer to that question; that's what this movie is about," says Ephron. "You just have to make it up as you go along and hope you don't screw it up too horribly."

For a first-time director, Ephron has exuded a remarkable confidence of late, manifesting none of the pre-opening jitters one might expect; she brought the film in on time and, by today's industry standards, quite cheap, at $10 million. She is proud of what she's accomplished: "I think if you're a woman and you see this movie you say, 'This movie, even if it's just one second of it, is about me.' "

On its deepest levels, of course, it is about her, and about her greatest strength —her ability to take whatever cards life deals out and turn them into a winning hand. If you're not pretty, make jokes about it and everyone will love you for your sense of humor instead. If someone humiliates you, return the favor in spades and get rich doing so. If your fabulously brittle and sophisticated mother wasn't as sympathetic at home as she was impressive in public, forge your childhood sorrows into steel. Unlike her mother, whose well-concealed weaknesses led her inexorably to a tragic end, Nora Ephron is indomitable. She learned her lessons well. Her parents were a hard act to follow, but she has already outdone them.

On a bright winter morning, sunlight streams in through the soaring windows of Ephron's cheerful Upper West Side kitchen. The fact that her sprawling eight-room apartment has been described as "baronial" might seem excessive somewhere other than Manhattan, but by New York standards even her kitchen ceilings are lofty enough for a ballroom. Ephron has lived here with her two sons ever since she and Bernstein broke up at the end of 1979; for the last nine years, the household has also included Ephron's third husband, Nick Pileggi, the author and screenwriter.

Small wonder: Ephron, at about five, *far left,* poses beside a portrait of her mother; with her younger sister Delia.

When Nick and Nora got together, the cynics wondered whether she would stay with him: "'Is he famous enough?' was the question."

When Nick and Nora got together, the cynics wondered whether she would stay with him: " 'Is he famous enough?' was the question," reports one mutual acquaintance. Then Pileggi hit the best-seller lists with *Wiseguy,* prompting Bernstein to comment in *Playboy,* "Usually, when that happens, Nora gets married. The trouble starts when you slip *off* the best-seller list."

Nora did get married, but by all accounts the trouble hasn't started; the Pileggi-Ephron marriage gets rave reviews from virtually everyone who knows them (and, besides, Pileggi has since scored a big success with the widely acclaimed screenplay he wrote with Martin Scorsese for *GoodFellas,* the movie based on *Wiseguy*).

The couple's domestic setup is as cozy as their relationship. Right now Pileggi is ensconced in his office across the courtyard from their apartment. Ephron is at home, curled in a chair at her kitchen table, picking thoughtfully at a dish of dried cherries from Zabar's and contemplating her life, or at least those portions of it she is willing to talk about. For a writer who has specialized in titillating personal revelations on paper, she can be curiously opaque in conversation; Ephron doesn't give anything away for free, and what she does share has long since been processed and packaged as part of the ongoing mythology of her life. "I've written about every thought that ever crossed my brain," she says breezily.

Before she even started committing her thoughts to paper, her parents were doing it for her. Born in New York and transplanted to Beverly Hills at the age of three, Nora was the eldest of the four daughters of Phoebe and Henry Ephron, who began to collaborate as playwrights and parlayed their success onstage into a lucrative career as screenwriters. Their credits included *Carousel, There's No Business Like Show Business, Daddy Long Legs, Desk Set, The Jackpot,* and *What Price Glory?,* and their movies featured an array of stars that ranged from James Stewart and Ethel Merman to James Cagney, Fred Astaire, Marilyn Monroe, Leslie Caron, Katharine Hepburn, and Spencer Tracy. The Ephrons' first play about Nora, *Three's a Family,* ran for 495 performances and played for a year and a half in London; years later, when she went off to college, they wrote *Take Her, She's Mine,* and Nora found herself portrayed on Broadway by Elizabeth Ashley under the direction of George Abbott. The Ephrons' life was a glamorous one, and not without its domestic comforts; Phoebe liked to wear stylish suits with big shoulder pads and tool around in her Studebaker, but when she was at home she read cookbooks in bed, and if she didn't exactly make dinner herself she always made sure the household had stellar cooks. Nora remembers her childhood as if it were a wonderful movie: in the eulogy she delivered at her mother's funeral, she talked about singing rounds at the dinner

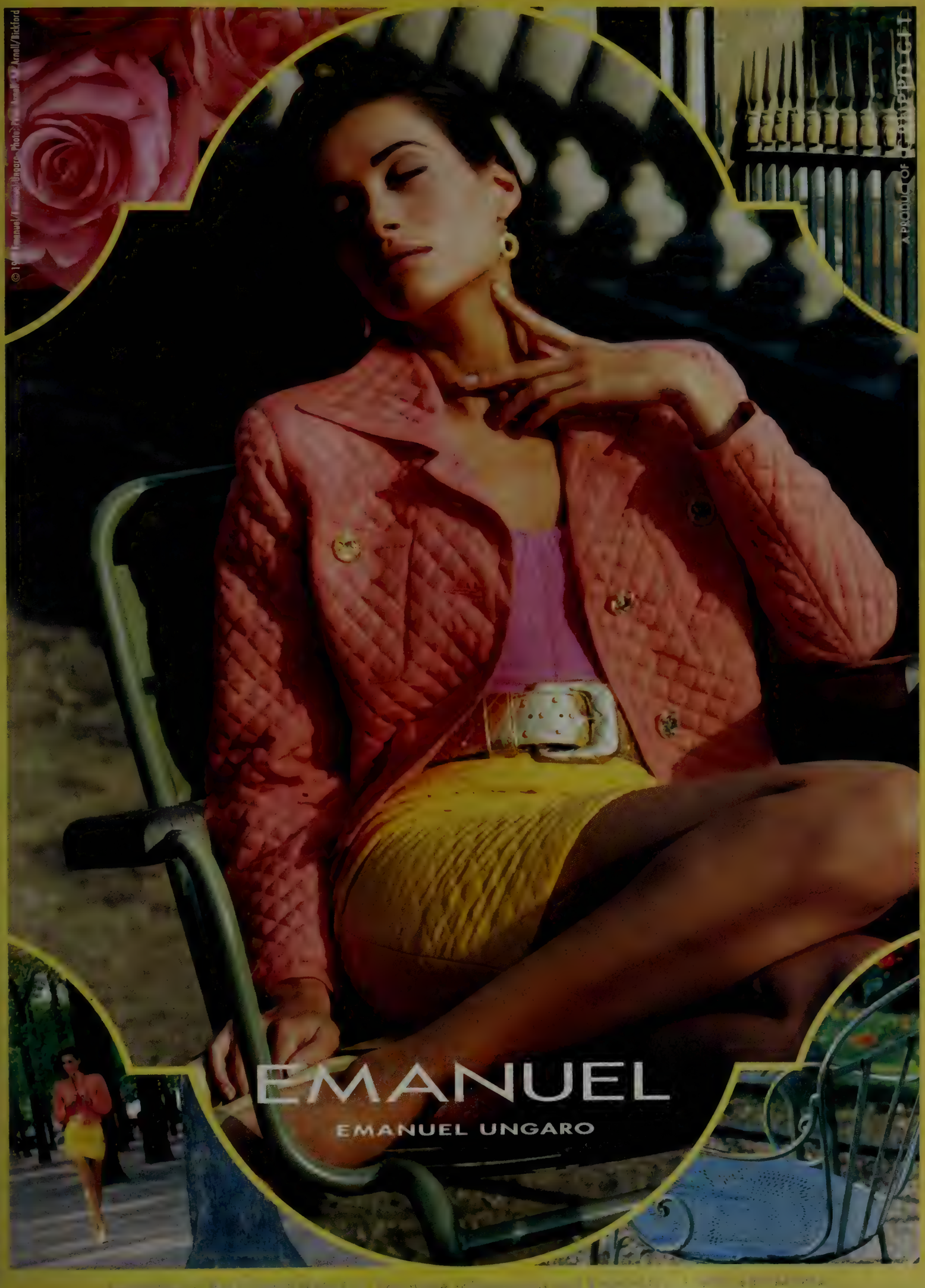
EMANUEL
EMANUEL UNGARO

table and playing charades afterward, and about how much fun it all was. "There was always a great deal of laughter," she said.

However, one of the underlying themes of *This Is My Life* is the variable nature of reality in any family, given the differences in perspective among individual members. The *Rashomon* quality of the Ephrons' shared history is dramatic. "I thought I grew up in a sitcom, and my youngest sister, Amy, thinks she grew up in a loony bin," Nora says. It took the girls years to realize that their mother drank too much, but by the time Nora went away to college the problem had become acute. "Mommy was this sort of closet alcoholic, where her best friends didn't know she drank," says Amy Ephron, who is eleven years younger than Nora and who, like three of the four sisters, writes books and screenplays. "She had this perfect personality, and then she would have one drink, and there would be this other person there. My father was drinking, and it was horrible; my parents used to scream all night. I remember Nora coming home from college one year and she suddenly realized what was going on. We got different parents; she got the upswing, and I got the downswing." According to Nora, Henry Ephron is a manic-depressive and has spent time in mental institutions; Phoebe was hospitalized for the last couple of months of her life, and she died at fifty-seven of cirrhosis of the liver. But even as she lay dying, she never lost her edge. When her eldest daughter went to visit her in the hospital near the end, Phoebe turned to her and commanded, "Take notes, Nora, take notes."

Ephron defends that ethos as a highly productive one, which in her case it apparently was. "That's an important lesson to learn—that what seems horrible to you today can be reborn as a funny story if you work hard enough at it," she says. "I think it's healthy for someone to point out to you that things might not be as tragic as you believe and there might even be some way to turn it into something." Indeed, in *Heartburn*, Nora wrote that her mother drank until "one day her stomach swelled up like a Crenshaw melon and they took her to a very fashionable hospital for rich people with cirrhosis and the doctors clucked and said there was nothing that could be done.... She lay there slowly dying, with my father impatiently standing by. 'Pull the plug,' he would say to the doctors.... Suddenly she opened her eyes and looked at me. 'I just screwed Darryl Zanuck on the remake,' she said, and gave a little croak...and died." But when the nurse pulls the sheet over her mother's face, the corpse suddenly whips it off and shouts, "Ta-da!" Convinced she has come back from the dead, she files for divorce, goes to New Mexico to find God, and marries a guy named Mel who believes he's God and takes her for every penny she's worth. The real Mrs. Ephron didn't recover or find Mel, but if her death was harrowing, in Nora's hands it played like a stand-up routine.

"I thought I grew up in a sitcom, and my youngest sister, Amy, thinks she grew up in a loony bin," Nora says.

Indeed, that was how she had learned to process everyday life. The Ephrons' dinner table was a nightly bonanza of bons mots, with everyone vying for the title of cleverest, but the competition didn't faze Nora—probably because she won without even trying. "You were supposed to tell little stories, and funny was better than not funny," she says. "Delia said, 'Everyone used to sit around the table and you were expected to tell stories and it was really grotesque.' I thought it was great. The truth is it was harder for my younger siblings than it was for me." The third-born Ephron daughter, Hallie Touger—who has opted out of the family business to become a manager at a computer company in Massachusetts—remembers the competition well. "You had to claim your airspace," she says dryly. "It was a lot like the Algonquin Round Table."

Small wonder that Nora grew up determined to become Dorothy Parker. Even when she was a child, no one doubted her potential. "She was a star," attests Hallie. "She's always been a star. She was Most Likely to Succeed in her senior class; she's always known what she wants and how to get it."

That, of course, was the behavior rewarded by her mother. When things weren't going so well, Mrs. Ephron wasn't interested. "If you went to a dance where no one wanted to dance with you, my mother was not the person to talk to about it," Nora says haltingly, as if this is difficult to admit. "Where did I go for sympathy? I don't know where I went for sympathy. I don't think there was a whole lot of sympathy." As an adult, she herself has always had a reputation for ruthlessness, but it's easy to see where it comes from; she internalized her mother's voice a long time ago. "Nora doesn't like whining," says Hallie. "I remember telling her about all the reasons I couldn't get a summer job once when I was a teenager, and she said, 'This is ridiculous. If you want something, go get it; don't tell me all the reasons why you can't do it.' It's hard for a younger sister if you just want sympathy, but she motivated me to stop looking for reasons why this or that was happening and to put the blame in my own hands."

Outside the Ephron family, there were other pressures, particularly for a skinny, dark-haired, flat-chested young woman who was never going to dazzle anyone in the land of blond surfers with her looks alone. Later on she would get considerable mileage out of that persona; she called her first published collection of essays *Wallflower at the Orgy*. But as a teenager, when she spent four years sleeping on her back, bought a Mark Eden bust developer, and splashed cold water on her breasts every night because some French actress had said in *Life* magazine that that was how she had acquired a perfect bustline, she had yet to transmogrify the insecurities into a commodity. "When you go to Beverly Hills High School, you're graded on one thing: your allure," says a fellow graduate. "Physical appearance is all that counts; it's not like the East. I think Nora's always projected herself as the ugly duckling. Her wit made up for not having the beauty; it was 'Don't mess with me.' She's one tough cookie."

Ephron has always been blunt about the urgency of her desire to escape Southern California. "I grew up in L.A. knowing that if I didn't get out of there I would die," she says. She proceeded from Wellesley directly to the big time; a reporting job at the *New York Post* led quickly to writing assignments at *Esquire* and *New York* magazine. By the time Ephron had made a name for herself as a writer in New York, she was equally famous for her merciless tongue. "One night some guy at a party had a really dumb date and she was trying to impress everyone and she said some-

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thing about 'the Reds,' " recalls Richard Cohen, a columnist for *The Washington Post*. "Nora went crazy. Five minutes later there was nothing but tissue on the floor; the woman had ceased to exist." Ephron will light into anybody, from the limo driver servicing her last wedding to the president's Secret Service detail, but some of her nastiest thrusts are reserved for other women—especially those who are beautiful as well as smart and successful. "One time a bunch of us were at a party in the Hamptons, and Gloria Steinem was wearing this backless dress," reports a fellow guest. Steinem is famous for being as thin as a stick, but that didn't offer any protection. "The minute she left the room, Nora hissed, 'Did you see the fat rolls on her back!' " says the guest.

Ephron claims she's long since gotten over any early insecurities about her looks, but her behavior sometimes suggests there are enduring scars. When Diane Sawyer married Mike Nichols, who directed Ephron's screenplays for *Silkwood* and *Heartburn*, the beautiful blonde newscaster became a target as well. At a party celebrating the nuptials, Ephron delivered a toast to Sawyer that some people thought funny but others found extremely mean. Ephron's disquisition on "How to Keep Mike Happy" focused mainly on food and on Sawyer's notorious lack of interest in such domestic arts as cooking—a skill for which Ephron herself is renowned. She also managed to get in a dig about Nichols's having gotten married in a church, since he and Ephron are both Jewish and Sawyer is not.

Ephron is well aware of her reputation as a one-woman neutron bomb, but she doesn't seem particularly perturbed by it. Indeed, in some ways it has served her quite effectively. "I know that people are afraid of me," she says evenly. "It's not something I worry about too much. Sometimes it's helpful. The opposite of it is something I'm not interested in, which is that people think they can walk all over you—and when you're a screenwriter, people think that anyway. I'm not running for office here; if I were, it would be a problem." Besides, she says, she doesn't even go in for public evisceration these days: "I don't do much of that anymore. I've definitely changed. I think I'm positively mellow." Behind her drooping eyelids, her eyes glitter dangerously; one feels about as safe with Ephron as a small bug might sitting in front of a motionless but hungry lizard with a very long tongue. She yawns. "You get older and you let them go by every so often," she says languidly. "You don't always say what you think. It's important to know what you think, but not always to say it. You spend a lot of time when you're younger getting in touch with your feelings—I've spent a billion dollars getting in touch with mine—but I've learned that just because you're having a feeling does not put you under a compulsion to express it."

"If you went to a dance where no one wanted to dance with you, my mother was not the person to talk to about it," Nora says haltingly.

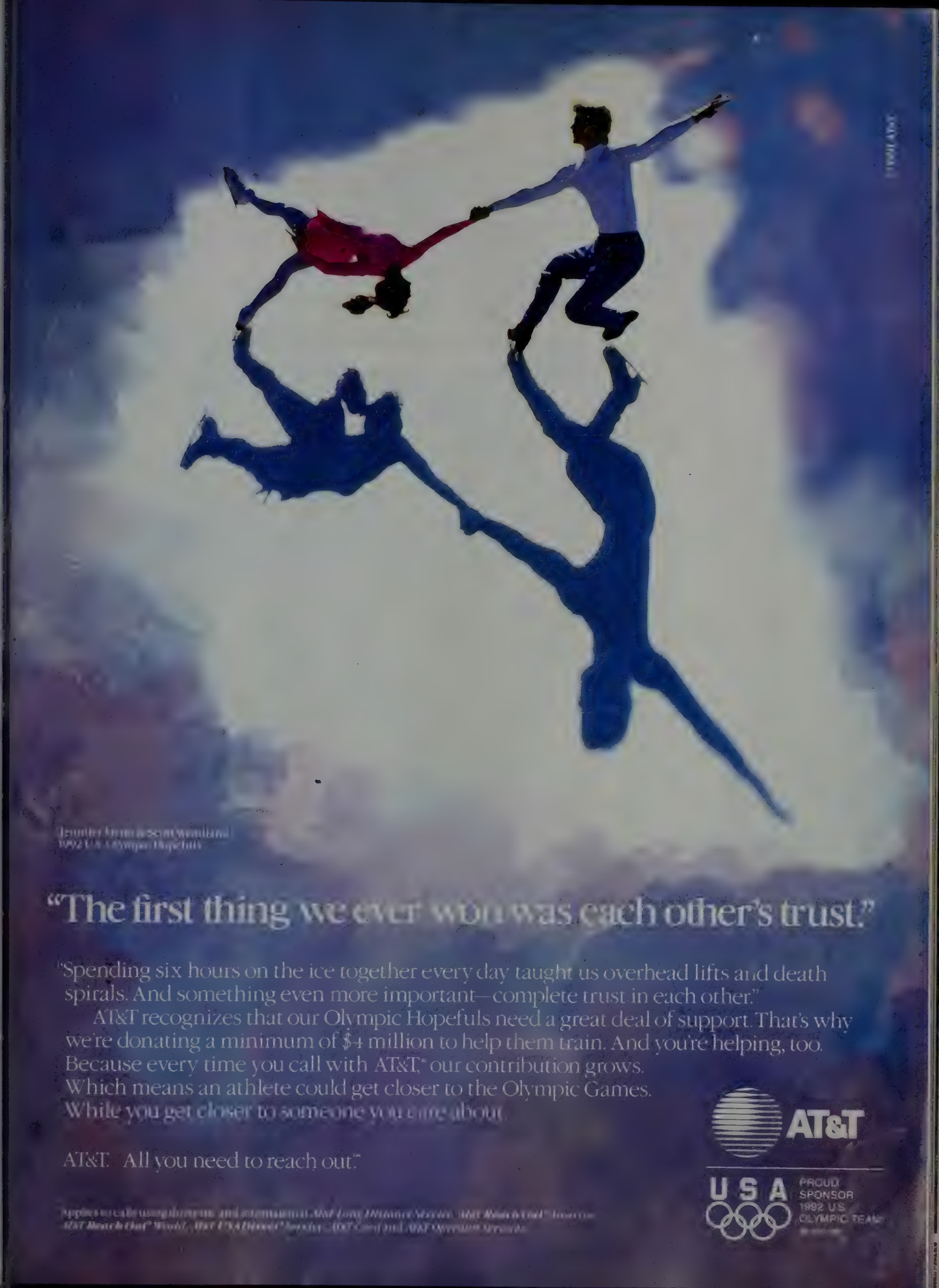
Some of Ephron's closest friends swear that she really has toned down her vitriol and people just haven't realized it yet. "She's still living with this old reputation of being the fastest gun in town," says Amanda Urban, vice president and co-chairman of the literary department at ICM. Others maintain that Ephron doesn't do anything to the rest of the world that she doesn't also do to herself. "She's got this X-ray vision that's quite scary," says Sally Quinn. "It's sort of a truth laser beam. She sees right through you; you can't get away with anything with her. I think what scares people is they feel denuded by her. But she's as ruthless about herself as she is about anyone else. She can look at herself and say, 'I'm this and this and this,' talking about her own faults and idiosyncrasies, and it will take your breath away. She sees things the way they really are."

The less charitable interpretation is that Ephron sees only the darker side of things. Even among the powerful, it's amazing how many movers and shakers use the same words: "Nora terrifies me," says one formidable woman. "Nobody's safe," adds another. "You just don't want to be in her mouth, particularly when she's with one of her pals." Another well-known New Yorker mentions the force field generated by Ephron and her clique, and says, "A lot of us just keep our backs to the wall and circle around them with a lot of trepidation, while remaining very friendly on the surface. Nora is the last person I would want as an out-and-out enemy."

Although a large proportion of such complaints tend to come from other women, the memory of *Heartburn* lingers, casting a powerful chill over men. A New York tabloid recently featured Ephron as one of "Ten New York Women Who Make Men Nervous," describing her variously as "the patron saint of the modern scorned woman" and as "Medea." "I think in some way my writing that book was a certain kind of male nightmare come true," Ephron muses. "Glenn Close in *Fatal Attraction* was one kind of male nightmare: 'What if I slept with a woman and she got pregnant and ruined my life?' I think I was some other form of male nightmare: 'What if I got involved with a woman and told her all my innermost secrets and she went off and wrote a book about it?' "

In *Heartburn*, Ephron portrayed the husband as cold, callous, and staggeringly self-absorbed, not to mention promiscuous. "The man is capable of having sex with a venetian blind" was probably the most quoted line in the book. Nor was Bernstein the only ex-husband who got burned; the novel also offered a scathingly funny portrait of the protagonist's first husband: stingy, compulsively neat, and obsessed with his hamsters, Arnold, Shirley, Mendel, Manny, and Fletcher. When Arnold died, his grieving master had him cryogenically frozen, brought him home in a Baggie with a rubber band around it, and interred him in the freezer. (It turns out that the humorist Dan Greenburg, Ephron's real-life first husband, had cats, not hamsters, and didn't go in for cold storage. However, the part about his sleeping with Nora's oldest friend is true.)

Ephron's motivation for writing about such episodes is considerably more complex than the simpleminded revenge suggested by her critics, although of course public vengeance has always been a large part of the mix. "Everyone uses stuff from their life," she says impatiently. "There is barely an American writer in the last fifty years who has gotten divorced and not written something about it, so give me a break. I just don't see anybody attacking any of them—but they're all men. It was quite fascinating to me that when a woman did it, everyone started worrying terribly about the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poor children." There were practical considerations as well; when she and Bernstein broke up, she needed money. More important, however, it was the image of victim that Ephron couldn't live with. "Nora wasn't going to be the pitiful jilted woman," says Sally Quinn. "She set a very good example of a woman who said, 'Not only am I not going to be a victim, but I'm going to take this tragedy and do something productive with it.' She made money on the book, she made money on the movie, and I think it showed that she wasn't going to be taken advantage of."

For in publicly humiliating her on such a grand scale, Bernstein had touched the deepest nerve of all: the girl for whom getting approval meant always being the cleverest one in the room was made to feel—and, worse, to look—stupid. "I think probably the feeling I like least in the whole world is feeling dumb," Ephron says grimly. "If your mom loves you for being smart, you feel idiotic being dumb—and I feel dumb about that marriage. I think it was foolish and pathetic of me to have thought it could have worked."

In retrospect, of course, she has briskly dispensed with any regrets. "I'm not a person who regrets things," she says. "I have this appalling ability to say, 'Well, if I hadn't done this, then that wouldn't have happened, so it's a good thing this happened after all.' There would be no way, in my sane mind, that I wouldn't regret having married Carl, except for the children, who are so cosmically wonderful that I'm thrilled I married Carl." Nor is she sorry for having written *Heartburn*, although many of her detractors have hopefully suggested that with the passage of time she might repent. "I don't regret it at all," she says, her voice steely. "I'm extremely fond of it. Given what the actual experience was like, I thought I had written a very good-humored book about it."

Ephron's control—over everything from herself and her work down to the minutiae of domestic life—is so impressive that one is often tempted to assume she is truly invulnerable. "On the surface, and three levels below the surface, down to the sub-basement, Nora is a very tough person," says Richard Cohen. "But the confidence doesn't quite go down to the toes. She gets scared and insecure and has all those other feelings everyone else has, too." Still, it is a shock when Nora and I do start talking about how it felt to discover, while seven months pregnant, that her husband was in love with another woman, and suddenly her hands fly up to her face, which has turned in an instant from its usual paleness to a blotchy red, and her eyes brim with tears. She clamps a hand to her mouth, and I realize that her lips are quivering so that she can't control them. Her eyes are wide with surprise, as no doubt are mine. We stare at each other for several very long moments, and then she waves her other hand frantically in front of her face as if to shoo something away. "You see, I can't talk about it," she says in a strangled voice. "Even after all these years, I just can't."

Ephron is well aware of her reputation as a one-woman neutron bomb. "I know that people are afraid of me.... Sometimes it's helpful."

It was Christmas of 1979, and Max Bernstein—born two months premature—was in the neonatal intensive-care unit at Mount Sinai Hospital. For weeks he had lain there in his isolette while Ephron recuperated from her emergency cesarean section and began the much longer process of recovering from the cataclysmic end of her marriage. "Nora went into a period of hibernation, and then one day she called up and said, 'It's time for me to show my face,' " recalls Amanda Urban, whose husband, the writer Ken Auletta, is also one of Ephron's close friends. "The three of us went to Elaine's for dinner, and people were happy to see Nora, and we all stayed pretty late, and then she turned to us and said, 'Do you want to see Max?' So we went up to Mount Sinai in the middle of the night, and there was nobody around; we just walked right up to the intensive-care unit. And there were Christmas lights twinkling on and off, and a big sign that said MERRY CHRISTMAS, and everything was dark and quiet except for all these Christmas lights. Nora put on a gown and mask and went into the intensive-care unit, and she held up to the window this little tiny, tiny baby, and we looked at him, and we looked at each other, and we all burst into tears."

Nora may have been shattered, but she didn't waste much time on her grief; so quickly her friends couldn't believe it, she had found an enviable place to live, set up a new household, and landed enough work to bring in some serious money. Within the next year she had begun to write not only *Heartburn* but also the screenplay for *Silkwood*, the Mike Nichols movie about the mysterious death of a plutonium-plant worker who would ultimately be played by Meryl Streep. "Nora had just split up with Carl, and she had these two tiny babies, but she had it all under control even then," says Alice Arlen, Ephron's collaborator on the screenplay. "She just had to make things work out."

Both Arlen and Ephron were essentially novices in the movie business, but over the next few years Arlen watched in amazement as her partner steadily outpaced her. "I just couldn't get over it," she says. "We'd go into things at the same time, and then all of a sudden she really would know—about marketing, about advertising, about the business side. She was learning the whole time, in a way that people would take her seriously. She's a good reporter; she watches, she listens, and she learns. Nora has a tremendous capacity for a lot of work, and she can get a huge amount done in a short period of time. She's got a computer in her brain." The two of them wrote four screenplays together, two of which—*Silkwood* and *Cookie*—were produced. But Nora did *Heartburn* alone, and then *When Harry Met Sally...*, which was a big hit—and all of a sudden she was a director. "I'm out on my own now," Arlen says wistfully. "It wasn't so easy at first. I felt a little bit like a shuttle set adrift, but Nora's really made the cut. She's a director now. I have to get used to it. It's the big boss." She laughs mirthlessly. "Trying to catch up with Nora—that's my goal."

That, as Nora's sisters could tell her, is hard to do. "She was the inheritor, in the strongest sense, of my mother's dreams," says Delia Ephron. "She was given dreams and ambition—to be a successful woman, a successful person, a successful writer. And when Nora decides she wants to do something, she just goes for it. When she started directing, she said, 'Why don't people ever say how much fun this is?' She really enjoyed it."

Ephron's friends attribute this in large

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part to her incorrigible bossiness. "Had she not gone into writing, she probably would be dictator of Argentina," says Richard Cohen. Ephron simply loves telling other people what to do and how to do it. "If you don't know what to serve for dinner, call me, because I do," she says. "If you don't know where to get $100 worth of flowers for $40, I know where to do this. I am full of information that's just dying to have a place to rest. I know who the cheapest floor guy in New York is who will still do a good job, and my slipcover person is the greatest slipcover person in America. All over New York are slipcovers that would not exist except for me, and I get such pleasure out of them. Where does my need to control all aspects of my friends' lives at all times come from? I don't know, but now that I'm a director, with every hope of making another movie at some point in my life, I have an appropriate channel for it. When you're the director, everyone wants a piece of you; they want to know what you think of the tablecloth. I loved nothing more than being asked 10,000 questions in one day."

For the most part, Ephron's intimates experience her guidance as nurturing; although they love to make jokes about it, they find her a valuable source of information and an unfailing support. "It's very reassuring to know that Nora's on your case, because she's usually right," says Quinn. "She advises me about my career, my household help, the contents of my refrigerator, which are never up to her standards. She gets very upset when things don't go well and she hasn't been consulted, whether it's about a party or a romance. She always gives you good advice, and if you don't take it, when things go wrong she says, 'I told you so.' " Ephron's influence over her friends can extend to the smallest details. "I've taken on all of Nora's affectations, like bringing your own tea bags," Lynda Obst groans. "I'm such a low-rent clone."

Of course, for a true control freak, being a screenwriter is the ultimate torture. "It's one of the real shocks when you're the writer of a movie and you discover that even on a good movie it isn't remotely what you meant," Ephron says. "Every single decision—what they're wearing, where they're sitting, what the room looks like, what the light is like outside. If you could make every movie with good directors, you wouldn't necessarily feel you had to become a director, but you make movies with directors who get so much less out of the script that you think, Well, I could have screwed this up as well as they could have. One of the great joys of directing it yourself is that it may not be good, but it's what you meant."

Long before the first day of shooting on *This Is My Life*, Ephron had done an exhaustive amount of homework, like the good student she has always been. "I have all these friends who are directors—Mike Nichols, Rob Reiner, Marshall Brickman, Alan Pakula, Sidney Lumet—and they all read the script and gave me advice and notes," she says, as casually as if it were unremarkable to have access to such counsel. She prepared herself so well that she was firmly in control from the outset. "Most of the crew in Toronto was male, but there was no rolling of the eyes," says Julie Kavner. "Nora is so damn smart that it was never even an issue. You don't fuck around with Nora."

"I think in some way my writing that book was a certain kind of male nightmare come true," Ephron says of *Heartburn*.

For her part, Ephron was even happier than she had expected to be. "When people tell you about directing, they primarily tell you about the sleepless nights and your health going down the tubes and the anxiety and the nightmare of it," she says, her eyes gleaming with satisfaction. "What they don't tell you is that it's unquestionably the best job in the world."

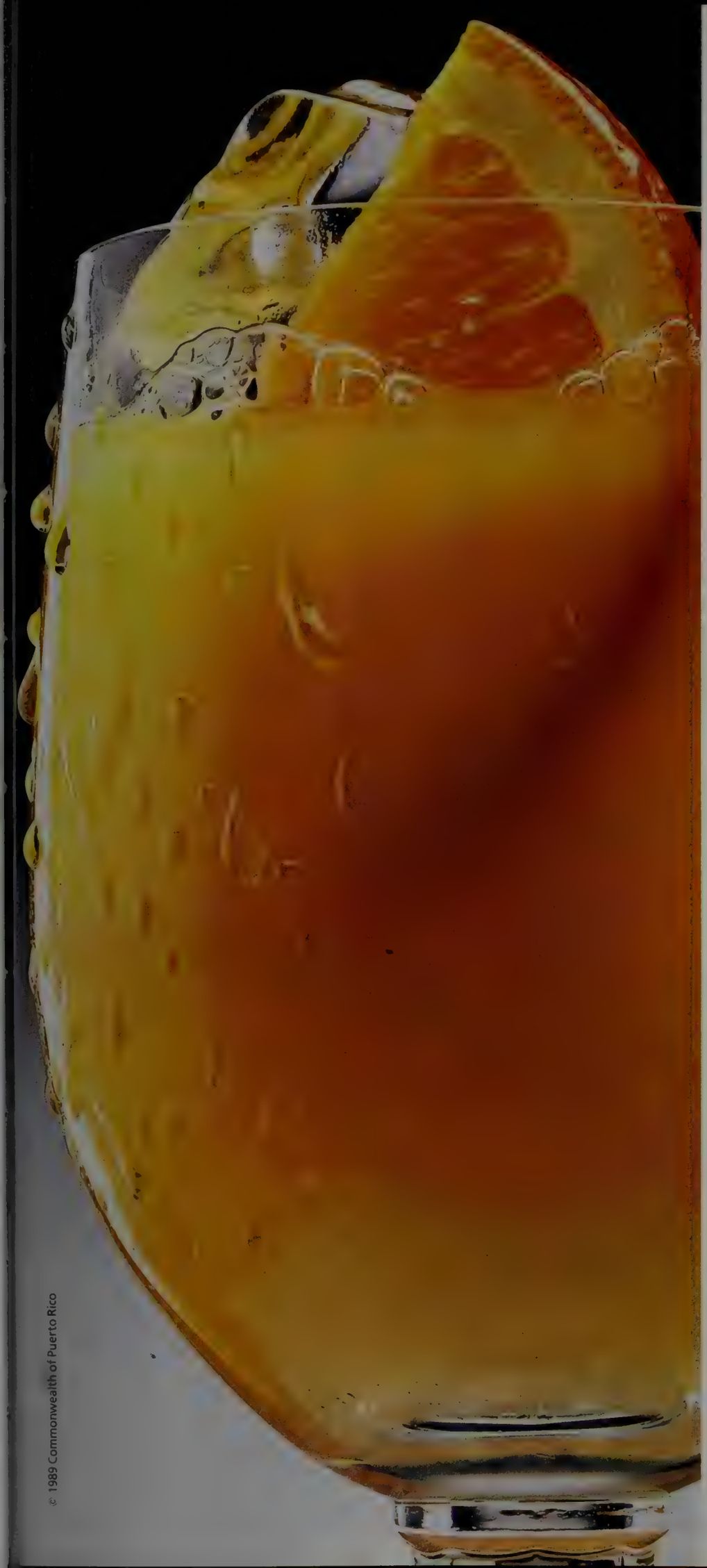
When Pileggi talks about his wife, he gets a smile of pleasure on his face that's so broad he seems about to levitate. It makes Ephron a bit uneasy to talk about how happy she is; after all, she thought her marriage to Bernstein was all right until he delivered his bombshell. If Pileggi sends her extravagant bouquets of flowers with a frequency that dazzles her friends, there is still a part of her that is afraid to believe her own good fortune. Not so her husband. He had known Nora for nearly fifteen years before they got involved, and although he was married to his first wife for most of that time, friends say he always had a soft spot for Nora. Indeed, when they both worked at *New York* magazine during the early 1970s, one issue featured a cover story by Nick and a cover line advertising another story by Nora; when I express interest, he jumps up, rummages around his office, and—amazingly—manages within moments to produce the carefully preserved eighteen-year-old issue, holding it aloft like a prized trophy. There they are: Nick and Nora, joined in type long before they were joined in life, their high-profile union evoking an appropriately cinematic reference to the glamorous couple in *The Thin Man*.

Pileggi's first wife left him the same year Carl and Nora went down in flames, and for the next couple of years he was somewhat shell-shocked. "I think Nick was the walking wounded for a long time," says Urban. "But Nora was eviscerated the way Nick was, so by the time they found each other, the notion of finding kindliness had become paramount. There was this unspoken agreement that they weren't going to kill each other. It really does come down to just day-to-day goodness to each other."

For Pileggi, his first dinner date with Nora obliterated old sorrows. "After that I never had dinner with anybody else," he says. "By the third date I had no questions. She's like the kind of Italian mama I grew up with; they make a house really a home. She loves to cook, she's a great mother, she's so smart and talented and inventive and helpful and caring—I've always thought she was sensational."

Pileggi, who has no children of his own but who dotes on his stepsons, attributes much of his professional success in recent years to his personal happiness. "I feel like my work, over the last nine years, has just taken off, as has Nora's, and I think a lot of it is because the home base is covered," he says. "You don't have to date anymore; you don't have to worry about New Year's Eve. All of a sudden our home life was solid and you didn't think in terms of limits; you thought in terms of what you wanted to do."

Mutual friends suspect that professional rivalries played a role in the demise of both of Ephron's previous marriages. When she was married to Dan Greenburg, one magazine interested in competing couples wanted to do a story about the fact that Ephron's writing career was taking off while her husband's was faltering (she refused to cooperate).



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While she and Carl Bernstein were together, Nora was her usual machinelike self; she has always been able to churn out copy with a baby or two crawling around at her feet banging on pots and pans. "But Carl was having the most incredible trouble writing, which was pretty much what was wrong with that marriage, and I think it was hard for him being married to somebody who just gets the job done," says Alice Trillin, an educational-television producer who is friends with both of them.

Ephron's third husband doesn't seem to have any problem with his wife's achievements. "We're in similar businesses, but we cover different turf," says Pileggi, who is currently writing a book on the casino business as well as working on two movie projects with Scorsese and another with Paul Schrader. Nor does Ephron's recent promotion to director give her husband pause. "It's such a kick to me," he says, beaming. "I love it." Perhaps fortunately, he harbors no such aspirations himself. He got so restless hanging around the set of *GoodFellas* that he asked Scorsese if he could be excused. "To sit around watching them move lighting equipment was boring to me," Pileggi says. "Not to Nora; Nora loved it. Nora really wanted to be part of that world, and she's a happier person because she's doing all this stuff."

When Nora's friends talk about how much she's mellowed in the last few years, which they do, they usually attribute it to her happiness in her current marriage. "She finally met this real grown-up, a wonderful person, and I think he's brought out what is more wonderful in Nora," says Liz Smith. "I think with the children and Nick she didn't feel she had to use her elbows so much." Amy Ephron adds, "Nick is very, very secure and he's very easygoing, and Nora's become more easygoing as a result of being with him." Alice Trillin sums it up: "Nora's finally got somebody who's strong enough to be married to her."

"When you're the director, everyone wants a piece of you. I loved nothing more than being asked 10,000 questions in one day."

At last Ephron has a man she feels she can depend on. "She was very concerned about going up to Canada and being separated from her kids while she was making this movie," says Judy Corman, an old friend. "Nick was this rock: 'I'll be here, I'll come up as much as you need me to, I'll stay away as much as you need me to, I'll be there for the kids.' He's perfect." Pileggi is also sensitive to the difference between his role and that of Bernstein: "Their father is a very important part of their lives," he says.

Ephron seems to have it all these days. "I love my children, I love my husband, I love my apartment, I love my profession, I love my friends—I love my life," she says. Her many blessings notwithstanding, however, some of those who have known her best doubt she will ever be truly content. "She's a very hungry woman," says one friend from way back, "hungry for all the things her parents had—ability, power, the right friends. Nora never has what she wants; Nora will never have what she wants. Nora always wants more."

And demands it: "She's terrible if she doesn't get the right table," says the owner of a hot restaurant Ephron likes to frequent. Still, the important things are all in place—and now she's even earned a membership in that very small club called women directors. Ephron's fee for screenplays is currently "in the high six figures," and she and Delia have already completed their next script, a comedy about a group of people at a suicide hot line on Christmas Eve, which Nora hopes to direct. Contemplating what more there might be to aspire to, I ask her if she has Academy Award fantasies. She laughs.

"There's no screenwriter who doesn't sit there at the typewriter or whatever thanking his dry cleaner or whoever was instrumental in getting the movie made," Ephron says. "I swear to you, the person who did *Debbie Does Dallas* had a fantasy. My fantasies about winning the Academy Award have been largely focused on screenwriting so far; I'm not quite deluded enough to have fantasies about winning an Academy Award for directing." There is a pause. "But I will," she says. "I guarantee you I will." □

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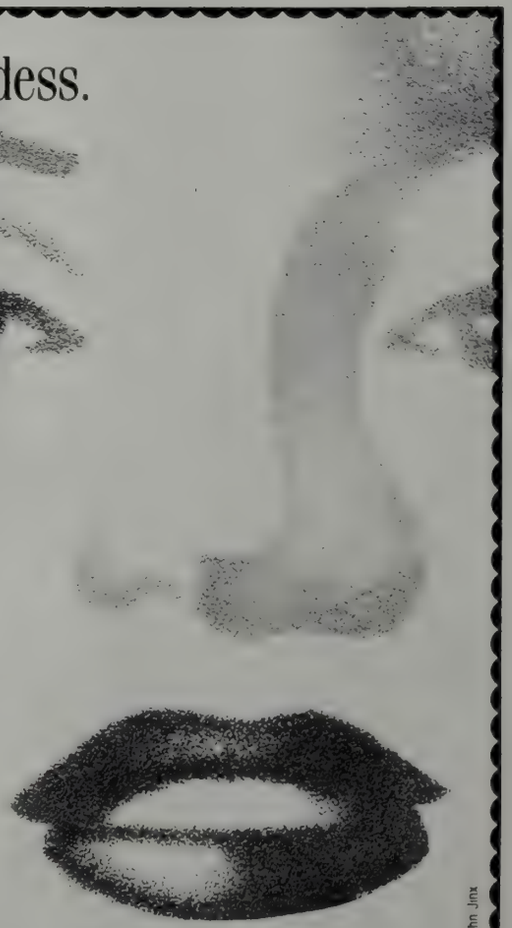

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Where style meets substance

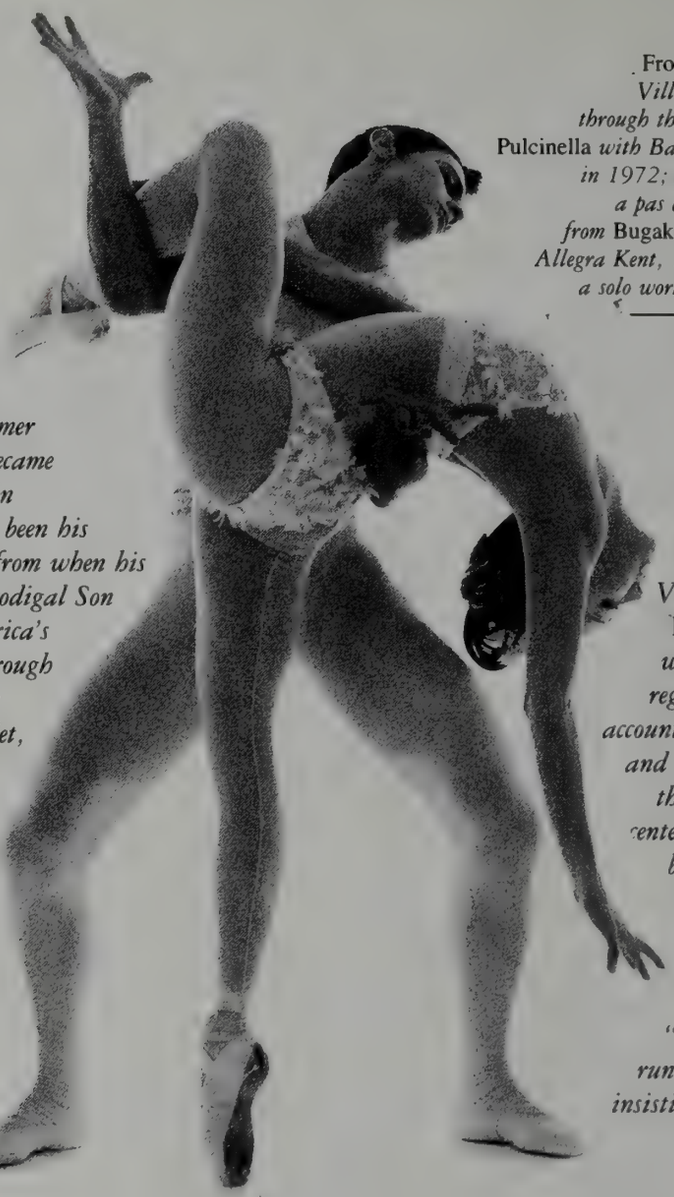
Burroughs (left) with Peter Weller, who plays his cinematic alter ego, William Lee.

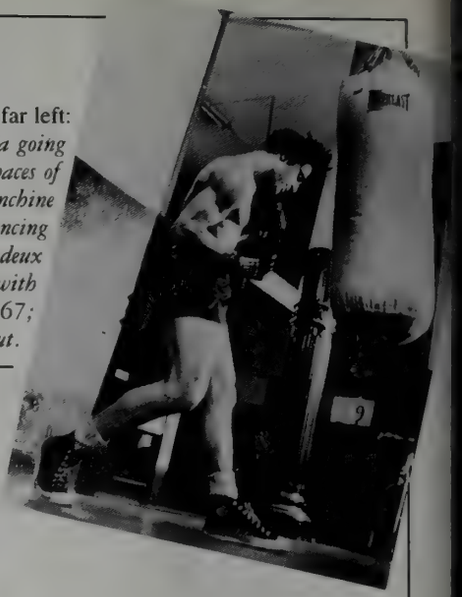
The Beat Goes On

Naked Lunch, by William S. Burroughs, seemed to rank with *Finnegans Wake* as one of the novels least likely to become a mainstream film. The subject of a watershed censorship battle, the book was a catalogue of violent perversions with a staunch disregard for conventional plot. "I'm shitting out my educated Midwest background once and for all," he noted. Now there actually is *Naked Lunch,* the movie. Director-screenwriter David Cronenberg retains the novel's paranoid, hallucinogenic perspective (embodied by such special-effect creations as living drug and sex machines), while imposing a mythic plot which takes its cues from Burroughs's biography—from his accidental killing of his wife Joan Vollmer to his drug- and hustler-hustling days in Tangier with Paul and Jane Bowles and Allen Ginsberg. Homosexual, junkie, and expatriate, Burroughs has been the outsider's outsider to successive generations of Beats, acidheads, and punks. Cronenberg's dazzling, luridly literary film, with its conspirator's sense of the world as a relentlessly dangerous place, suggests that Burroughs's austere decadence also has a place in the decadently austere nineties. —BEN BRANTLEY

Photograph by WAYNE MASER

Villella Extract





From far left: *Villella going through the paces of* Pulcinella *with Balanchine in 1972; dancing a pas de deux from* Bugaku *with Allegra Kent, 1967; a solo workout.*

Edward Villella is the former boxer from Queens who became the most electric presence in American ballet. He has been his own category of danseur from when his debut as Balanchine's Prodigal Son in 1960 made him America's first ballet sex symbol through to his current position as artistic director of the Miami City Ballet, a company he has brought to national attention. In vintage Villella fashion, his autobiography, Prodigal Son *(Simon & Schuster), written with Larry Kaplan, should register a few jolts. In his lean, taut account of his life—"Sweat was my ethic and my aesthetic"—the famous faces of the New York City Ballet come full center stage, right down to one priceless butt shot, Melissa Hayden bending the dancer over for some B_{12}: "Honey, take down your pants." The most incisive portrait is of George Balanchine, Villella's "artistic father," who gave him the run of his vast repertory while always insisting "he had the power to humiliate me anytime he pleased."*

—OTIS STUART

Horne of Plenty

"Rossini and I," Marilyn Horne says, "still seem to be made for each other." Their felicitous match will be appropriately celebrated this month when Horne turns her soaring talents to the composer's bicentennial gala. Horne, the greatest mezzo-soprano in the world today, was one of the first American singers to revive Rossini's demanding bel canto. Following recitals in Montreal and Chicago, she will perform with such other premier Rossini interpreters as June Anderson, Frederica von Stade, Rockwell Blake, Samuel Ramey, and Thomas Hampson in concerts that will be televised live from New York's Lincoln Center. Meanwhile, BMG Classics will release a new Horne recording of twenty-two Rossini *canti*.

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LOREN HAMMER

Radio Waves

One of the smallest women's clubs in the world is the group of female producers now active in Hollywood. And while she may not be as well known as Sherry Lansing or Debra Hill, Lauren Shuler-Donner is a pioneer. She has managed to make movies that are both personal and popular, from *Mr. Mom* and *St. Elmo's Fire* to her latest, *Radio Flyer,* and professes no fear of the current shark tank she finds herself in. After all, she broke into the male bastion as one of Hollywood's few camerawomen: "The guys were afraid to swear in front of me, and it made everyone tense. So I learned to swear more." And what about working with her husband, director Richard Donner, on this picture? "We do manage to turn it off when we're at home, although sometimes I wake him up at three A.M. with an idea." —KIKI MASON

The producer: Lauren Shuler-Donner.

Night-table Reading

Christie Hefner *(chairman and C.E.O. of Playboy Enterprises, Inc.):* The American Kaleidoscope, *by Lawrence H. Fuchs (Wesleyan/University Press of New England). "Professor Fuchs ably demonstrates the unique power of our 'civic culture' to bring us together as a nation. This is an eloquent plea for tolerance, pluralism, and idealism."*

Carl Lewis *(Olympic athlete):* Ferrari: A Memory, *by Gino Rancati (Motorbooks). "This is more a lesson in life than cars. He was adamant about quality and details, steadfast in his ideals, and involved in the company until the end."*

Shirley Conran *(novelist):* Lady's Maid, *by Margaret Forster (Doubleday). "The enthralling love story and fabulous elopement of Robert and Elizabeth Browning, told from the maid's point of view."*

Elvis Costello *(musician):* Trial of Strength: Wilhelm Furtwängler and the Third Reich, *by Fred K. Prieberg (Quartet). "He was a German conductor who believed that music had a higher moral and spiritual force, capable of withstanding the pornography and perversion of Nazism."*

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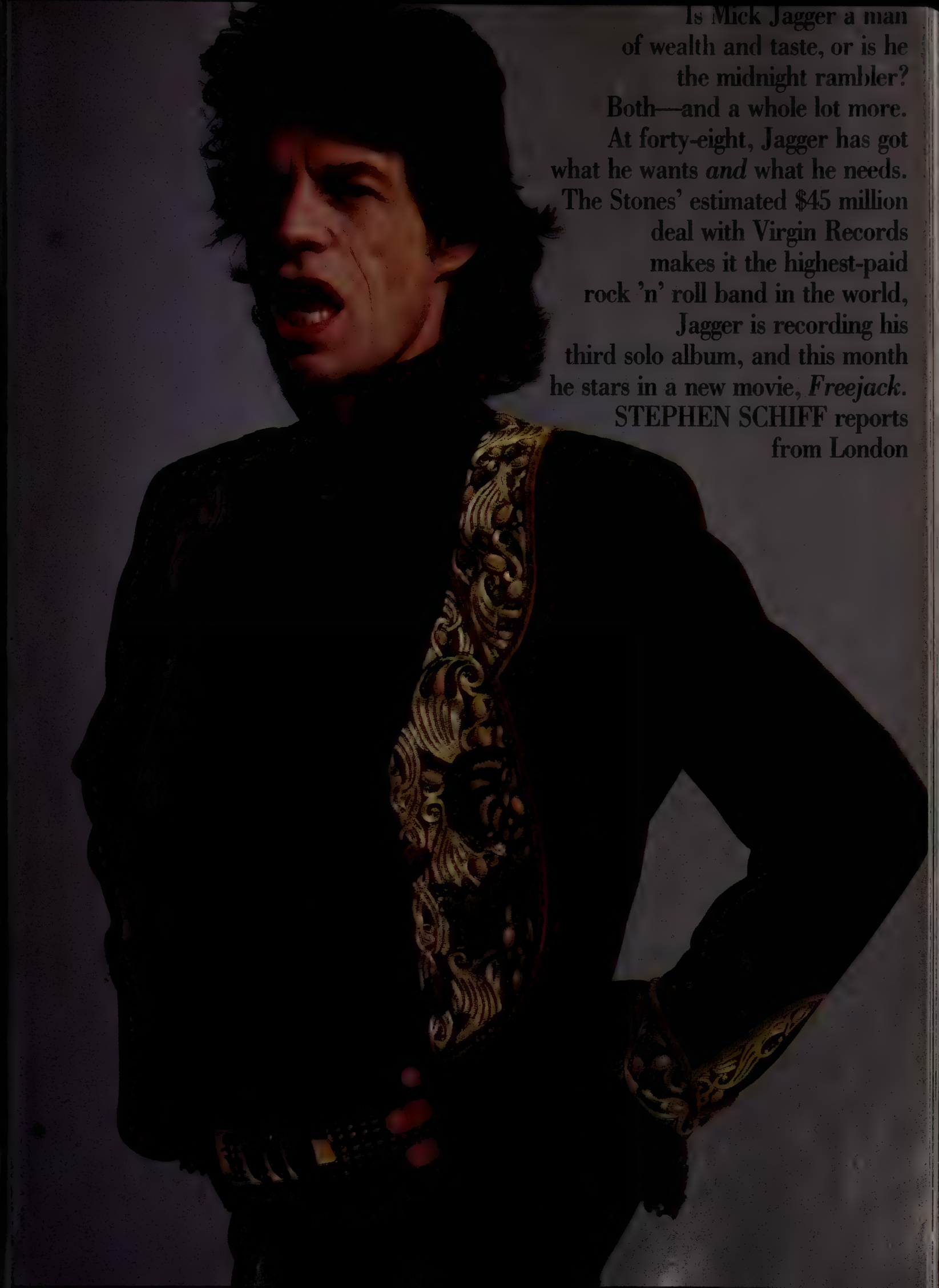
MICK'S MOVES

Photographs by ANNIE LEIBOVITZ • Styled by MARINA SCHIANO



Is Mick Jagger a man of wealth and taste, or is he the midnight rambler? Both—and a whole lot more. At forty-eight, Jagger has got what he wants *and* what he needs. The Stones' estimated $45 million deal with Virgin Records makes it the highest-paid rock 'n' roll band in the world, Jagger is recording his third solo album, and this month he stars in a new movie, *Freejack*. STEPHEN SCHIFF reports from London

He never quits moving. Even when the music stops behind the thick glass wall at London's Olympic Studios, Mick Jagger boogies on, wired to some perpetual drum machine no one else can hear. Studying a notebook, he judders around the control room's perimeter in a stagger-step not unlike the bunny hop; glancing through the latest issue of *Guitar Player* magazine, he maintains an elegant mincing frug. "Wha's next, boys?" he chirps distractedly, still reading, still dancing. "Come on. Time is money."

The engineer rolls the tape, and the enormous Genelec speakers emit a volcanic flow of fuzz guitars with a tumbling piano cascade on top. Above it all, the famous voice, all candied resentment: "Don't tear me up / I don't wanna see your face anymore / Don't poison my blood / I don't wanna see your picture no more." Half-formed though it is, the new song already sounds like vintage Jagger, fending off some encroaching lover, yet somehow luring her nearer; batting away entrapment and commitment, yet hell-bent on seduction at the same time. The voice is forty-eight years old now, but it's still the same throaty caw that fueled "Satisfaction" and "Jumpin' Jack Flash," "Honky Tonk Women" and "Sympathy for the Devil": a snarl with a sob in it, sweet and impudent and indelibly solitary—one of the defining noises of rock 'n' roll.

Jagger listens thoughtfully, slumped on a chair in front of the vast control board, his black sneakers jackhammering the floor. "Something a bit off about the timing in the second verse, Matt," he says, and Matt Clifford, the young pianist who has become his friend and musical aide-de-camp, hustles past the glass wall to the oak-paneled room beyond, where a Bösendorfer squats among microphones and wires. Jagger is plainly in command here, and yet the atmosphere in the studio is surprisingly light and genial, as though he had taken pains to ensure that no one was overawed in his presence. Watching the musicians and engineers, I remember something that Julien Temple, who has directed several Jagger videos, told me: "There's no star bullshit when you work with Mick. The thing that always strikes me is just how accessible he is. You never feel that he's dictating. And he works his ass off."

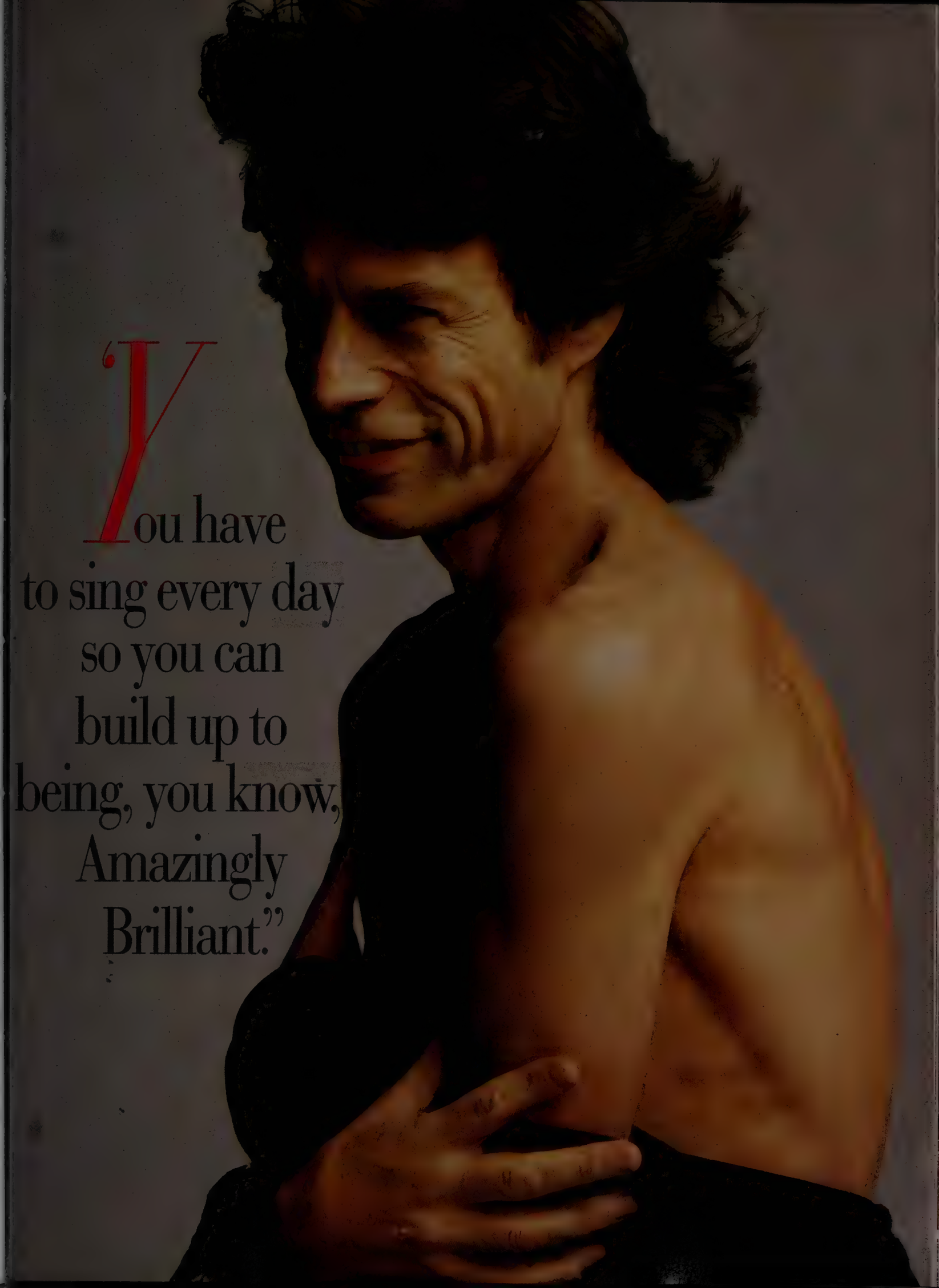
The project at hand is a solo album, Jagger's third, and there's not a Rolling Stone in sight. Nor will there be. "Doing a solo album, it's more relaxed than doing the Rolling Stones," Jagger drawls, accenting the first syllable: *Roll*ing Stones. "With a solo album, no one's going to get on my case. It's just free and easy. And I don't *really* want to *do* a Rolling Stones record right now. I just spent two years with them on the Steel Wheels tour [in 1989 and 1990], and it can get a bit incestuous if you just play everything with one band." His voice rises and falls in melodic waves. "But, you know, I'm still me," he says. "It's still going to sound like me. I'm the singer of the Rolling Stones. I can't completely change."

We are sitting in a dank yellowish room across from Olympic's Studio 2, a room whose peculiarly tawdry flavor derives largely from its décor: billiard and Ping-Pong tables on the floor, and on the wall Holiday Inn–style paintings of rock stars by the Stones guitarist Ron Wood. Jagger is perched in front of me in a green silk blouse and wide-wale corduroys, but no matter what he puts on he looks as if he's wearing pajamas. Maybe that's because, despite the fidgeting, his tiny body also seems supernally relaxed, almost boneless; it folds and flops like the body of a sleepy child. Nothing about him is straight or taut. He doesn't cross his legs, he braids them. Even standing up, he always seems to be bouncing precariously on a coil of rubbery leg.

A friend of his once observed that the signing parts of Mick Jagger's body—the parts that communicate—are exaggerated. And it's true: the hands are enormous, and so is the head, which thrusts and swivels while he speaks, as though he were a Balinese dancer. Age has marked his face—there are sea-horse-shaped hollows below his cheekbones, and huge furrows alongside the grouper mouth—but hasn't robbed it of its appeal. His grin is still a Hollywood premiere, all klieg lights and swinging limo doors, and when the fluorescents hit those enormous horsey teeth, he seems to be emitting his own personal laser beam—mainly because of the diamond planted in his upper incisor.

That diamond is redolent not only of his rock stardom but also of his will to dazzle. Jagger isn't arrogant, and he doesn't put on airs, but he does aim to beguile. He wants to surprise you with his charm, to assure you once and for all that he's not the working-class yob people first took him for, nor the louche rock scruffy that success made him seem, nor even the gentrified aristo he's been portrayed as for the last decade or so—that he's none of the things you've read he is, and none of the things you want him to be. Above all else, Mick Jagger refuses to be pigeonholed. Fame came to him (in the form of his first top-ten record) when he was still a student at the London School of Economics, not yet embarked on a career or a fate, and in some ways his temperament seems frozen where it stood in 1964, in the posture of a precocious kid who hasn't quite decided what to do with his life. He still reserves the right to turn himself into a movie actor, for instance—as he's attempting to do opposite Emilio Estevez and Anthony Hopkins in the new film *Freejack*—or a family man—his third child by model Jerry Hall is due any minute—or anything else he thinks he's capable of being.

"He's a chameleon," his friends always say, and that's plainly true: half the fun of being with him is watching him change colors. Conversing with Jagger, you feel wafted aloft on a sea of pleasant chatter, most of it knowledgeable, much of it oddly superficial and disjointed, all of it diverting, and made the more so by his delivery—the campy fake East End accent, the coquettish blinks and darting eyes, the outbursts of boffo Monty Python–style mimicry, the huge adolescent giggle. Sometimes he seems to be yammering just to keep the air filled—or to distract you from any question that might pin him down or penetrate his zealously guarded privacy. In conversation,


"You have
to sing every day
so you can
build up to
being, you know,
Amazingly
Brilliant."

MICK'S METAPHOR

Jagger struts for the camera in London.

PHOTO BY RICHARD TYLER; LEGGINGS BY CHARIS VERSACE

To be
Mick Jagger is
to preserve
above all else
the ability
to boogie out
of reach.

he's much the way he is on the stage or in the recording studio, a perpetual-motion machine, a butterfly eternally dancing out of reach.

If you want to talk about the past, about the crazy, rebellious days of the sixties, he may humor you for a while. "I wasn't *trying* to be rebellious in those days," he'll explain. "I was just being me. I wasn't trying to push the edge of anything. I'm being me and ordinary, the guy from suburbia who sings in this band, but someone older might have thought it was just the most awful racket, the most terrible thing, and where are we going if this is music? And all those things—the Rolling Stones are dirty and haven't got a uniform, and where was it all going to end? Because that was the norm. But all those songs we sang were pretty tame, really. People didn't think they were, but I thought they were tame. A lot of it was bullshit, the whole idea of 'Let's Spend the Night Together' and a lot of other things—it was so ridiculous."

Press him further about that era, or ask him about Marianne Faithfull, Brian Jones, Altamont, Bianca, or anything else that might appear under the heading of Sex, Drugs, and Rock 'n' Roll, and you get a symphony of sighs and groans, a cartoon display of rolling eyes and flailing rubber arms. "I'm not interested in all 'at shit," he growls, reverting to deep Cockney, "all 'at history; 'at's not history to me. History is, well. . . [his voice suddenly high and refined] I've read a very interesting history of George Bernard Shaw recently, very much about not only the man but also about the times and so on. And there's quite a good one of Dickens. . ." and we're off and chattering, scrabbling from Michael Holroyd's biography of Shaw and Peter Ackroyd's of Dickens to Allan Bullock's comparison of the lives of Stalin and Hitler, and then the arrangement of death and labor camps across Europe, and on and on. Jagger loves being well read, and his tone during all this bookish palaver is moistly eager, even schoolboyish. One can well imagine where he got his reputation for being able to sit for hours at an upper-crust British house party charming the bloomers off ancient countesses and moldering dowagers. He's *(Continued on page 163)*

SPOTLIGHT

Sheryl's Perils

As Laura Palmer in David Lynch's *Twin Peaks*, Sheryl Lee sought peace on the astral plane of the blonde and the dead. The pretty corpse she left behind created a Karmic uproar, scratching a rift in the sexual membrane between this world and the next. By the end of the series, "Who killed Laura Palmer?" had taken a backseat to more burning questions, such as "What's that phantom horse doing in the living room? Huh?" This spring will see the *Twin Peaks* movie, a prequel documenting the final days of Laura Palmer. Using the Laura Palmer diary written by David Lynch's daughter, Jennifer, as a study guide, Lee aims to patch together a trashed soul. "People like Laura make destructive choices because they're in pain. She's a very, very lonely person. The hardest part was living with her loneliness for two months, taking it back to the hotel with me each night." Since Lee didn't get to do much more on the series than show her dimples, it will be interesting to see her demons.

Currently living in the Hollywood Hills, the twenty-five-year-old actress also essays the stage. She and Luke Perry of *Beverly Hills, 90210* recently did a reading of A. R. Gurney's *Love Letters* before an audience of squealing teenyboppers, earning their place as the Lunt and Fontanne of the Clearasil set. In her off-hours, Lee practices Kundalini yoga. Her favorite set of exercises is called "Diving for the Blue Pearl." I tried that once and they had to fish me out of the clothes hamper. —JAMES WOLCOTT

STYLED BY VIVIAN TURNER. HAIR BY CEMAL. BOTH FOR CLOUTIER. MAKEUP BY LEANNE HIRSH FOR VISAGES STYLE. DRESS FROM LES HABITUDES, BEVERLY HILLS; GLOVES, NECKLACE, AND EARRINGS FROM MAXFIELD, L.A.

Photograph by FIROOZ ZAHEDI

SHERYL LEE

In the Twin Peaks movie, she aims to patch together a trashed soul.

SO LONG, SUNUNU

In the end there was no one left to mourn the political demise of former White House chief of staff John Sununu. But why was George Bush the last to agree that the ballistic behemoth had to go? It may have been loyalty, or fear of thunder on the right. Or was Sununu the president's secret weapon?

SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL reports

John Henry Sununu arrived in Washington three years ago invested with enormous power but without ever having been at the national center before. First impressions were crucial for the new president's new man. He may have been familiar to seasoned political reporters, but not to the powers that be, who wanted to get to know him personally. By virtue of his appointment as the White House chief of staff, he was going to be an important fixture in their lives. They would have to deal with him, possibly for eight years—and he would have to deal with them.

The Establishment is not averse to being manipulated by manners, which can smooth over almost any political difference. It is an iron, though unwritten, law of Washington that the more casual, self-deprecating, and jokey a politician is about the whole heavy business of power, the better it will go for him. When Ronald Reagan was first elected, his easy personality was a crucial factor in settling his administration of outsiders in town. Sununu's boss, for his part, had been on the scene for four decades in a succession of ever higher positions, beginning as the eager-to-please son of Senator Prescott Bush. George Bush could claim to hail from Texas, Connecticut, or Maine, but he was accepted as an old Washington hand and widely acknowledged as the master of the nice little note.

One of the first and most significant invitations Sununu received was for lunch at *The Washington Post*. The senior editors, the editorial board, and Katharine Graham, the newspaper's owner, greeted him in a private dining room. The *Post* may have waged a war to the death with Richard Nixon, but Mrs. Graham had gone out of her way to befriend the Reagans and the Bushes. Through all the courses, the tone with Sununu remained "cheery," as one of those present described it.

But after coffee, as he appeared to be leaving, Sununu abruptly turned to Mrs. Graham. "I need to talk to you in private," he said insistently. Sensing the unexpected, she pulled Len Downie, then the managing editor (now executive editor), along for the meeting. Once in Mrs. Graham's office, Sununu

NANCY SHIA

KING JOHN
Senator Bob Dole took to calling Sununu "the chief of chaff."

suddenly exploded with indignation. A reporter from the *Post* was digging into his background, and he didn't like it one bit. In fact, a reporter had been assigned to profile him, a rite of passage that almost every major official experiences. The reporter was investigating Sununu's politics—and his finances. The chief of staff was startled by this encounter with a form of journalism that was completely beyond his reach. (In the self-enclosed, small world of New Hampshire, where he had reigned as governor, the largest newspaper was the Manchester *Union Leader*, a quirky right-wing publication whose news columns tended to follow the lead of its editorial policy, which was pro-Sununu.) When the new chief of staff's ranting subsided, Downie assured him that the piece would be fair and accurate, which seemed to calm him.

Back in his sunny corner office in the West Wing, where the daily strategy for the president is planned, Sununu gathered around him his white-shirted, red-tied band of deputies to regale them with his account of lunch at the *Post*. In his telling, it became a tale of a heroic victory, of arms on a foreign battlefield: his authority was commanding; the evil queen and her legions had been repulsed. Word soon filtered back to the *Post*, as it almost always does, when a White House source told one of the paper's reporters that Sununu had crowed, "I really told that cunt where to get off."

Mrs. Graham descended from her suite upstairs to the expansive newsroom to hear from the editors the four-letter description of her by the new White House chief of staff. She could not quite believe his coarseness. She had wanted to think of George Bush's assistant as a gentleman.

Though he now denies the quote, the impression Sununu made at the *Post* was indelible. But the newspaper's owner and editors were only among the first to be shocked into wondering: how did this short, rumpled, two-hundred-pound man who felt the compelling need for imaginary triumphs of will emerge from obscurity to sit at the right hand of the president?

"Everyone knows everyone manipulates everyone else," remarks one G.O.P. politico about Washington. But the alliance between George Bush and John Sununu was never so simple. At its heart lay a rather complicated master-servant relationship. The patrician used this rough ethnic character to seize his critical win in the 1988 New Hampshire primary. Once in the White House, the president used him as his Praetorian guard to intimidate critics and quell plebeian revolts. At the same time, Sununu was using Bush to rise to national power, lording his might over everyone else, whom he treated as mere servants. "You find yourself in countless situations," Sununu had observed, "and you have to decide—sweetness and light or..." His golden rule was: Do unto Others Before They Do unto Me. Humiliation was his main measure of control. The proof that he was in charge was the degree to which he could make others prostrate themselves before him. "That's how he thinks about life," says a Republican consultant from New Hampshire who has known him since his earliest political days. (Sununu declined an interview request for this article, but responded to specific charges.)

Yet Sununu became a brutish master because his own master cast him in that role. Policy-making, as Bush once put it, is reserved for "the best people." Politics, on the other hand, is unfortunately a low, dirty game that requires low, dirty creatures who thrive in its dank atmosphere. From the beginning, it was clear that Bush's political handlers were to toil downstairs, acting out the side of the aristocrat that he did not wish to display. Whatever his weaknesses, his footmen were to compensate. Whatever the tactics, the blame would stick to them. The ultimate job of the political manipulators is to be manipulated themselves.

Washington, under the heel of John Sununu, had a whiff of the Borgia court. Within the Republican Party especially, fear and mistrust became unspoken assumptions of conversation. Even friends wondered whether they should be guarded in their remarks to each other, fearful that any whispered criticism of the president or his henchman would echo back through a hundred corridors to Sununu, setting in motion the machinery of revenge.

But playing Sununu is a performance designed to self-destruct, a political exercise in planned obsolescence. Inevitably, the henchman's cycle of revenge turned back on its creator. The conspiracy against him consisted of all the enemies he had made: the president's closest friends, members of the Cabinet, the sharpest Republican political operatives, the Republican congressional leadership, the powerful organs of the press—not to mention the Democrats. In the end, says a Republican consultant, "there was no one on the planet that Sununu could call who was an ally and could do anything for him."

"Ding, dong, the witch is dead!" exclaimed a member of the president's newly appointed re-election committee just days after the White House fell on Sununu. "Are we off the record?"

"People are freer now," an influential Republican lobbyist rejoiced. "Democracy has come back to Washington."

"Sununu" is the Arabic word for swallow. But this Sununu was no small, soaring bird. He was born in 1939 in Havana to a Lebanese movie distributor and a Lebanese-Greek mother, who moved to Forest Hills, New York, when he was a child. Young John lived the classic immigrant success story. He won a scholarship to LaSalle Military Academy, where, at his graduation, he was given a silver bowl to hold all his medals and honors. He graduated from M.I.T., taught engineering at Tufts, and in 1969 moved to Salem, New Hampshire, to make his fortune.

His business, JHS Engineering, was formally a small engineering consulting firm. But Sununu was in effect a high-paid spokesman for the nuclear-power industry, which was then promoting and building a huge plant at Seabrook, on the coast near Portsmouth. He spent much of his time pressing the case for nuclear power on television and at the State House in Concord. His ambitions soon turned to politics. He was elected to a seat in the four-hundred-member New Hampshire House of Representatives in 1972. He ran for four higher offices and lost each time: for the state Senate (twice), the state Executive Council, and the U.S. Senate. These defeats shouldn't have surprised the upstart. The New Hampshire G.O.P. is a bastion of insular, north-country Yankees, and the ungainly, ethnically exotic Sununu was treated as a squatter. The ridicule he encountered was intense. He tried to take the sting out of it by making fun of his name himself. "What's a sununu?" ran his slogan in his losing 1980 U.S. Senate campaign.

"How could George Bush not know this? For a guy who allegedly makes two hundred phone calls a week to all his buddies, you'd think he knew."

His virtues were his intelligence and perseverance. No matter how much scorn he suffered, he diligently made the local Republican Party rounds. "His name identification was higher, but he was not well respected," recalls a New Hampshire Republican. When Sununu ran for governor in 1982, his greatest assets were a divided Republican field, a claim to be the truest conservative within it, and the financial backing of the nuclear-power industry. On his behalf, the vice president, George Bush, swooped into the state to host what was then the most successful fund-raiser in the state's history. At last, Sununu was no longer a "what": he was the governor.

He instantly established himself as an imperious overlord, earning the sobriquet King John. Though he had used the conservatives to vault into office, once in power he treated them as mere supplicants. Many were resentful that they didn't receive the patronage or regular massaging they had expected. In New Hampshire, the power of a constitutionally weak governor principally depends upon maintaining control over a five-member Executive Council, which approves all appointments and contracts. Sununu assiduously devoted himself to their care and feeding. By granting them the favors they craved, he could get what he desired, which included, not least, the massive Seabrook reactor.

The Republican-dominated House and Senate were easily brought to heel. Legislators did his bidding—or else. He screamed obscenities at those with the temerity to disobey, even chasing some down the hallways of the State House. He held the press in special contempt, though he developed a few relationships with reporters who felt grateful that they were being given access. But any reporter who covered the news independently was treated as an enemy of the state. The governor telephoned one veteran journalist, who had been on the State House beat for a decade, on the eve of her departure for a new job and marriage. "I understand congratulations are in order," said Sununu. She thanked him. "I didn't say I was offering them," he replied. "I just said they were in order. What I really wanted to say was '*Fuck you.*' "

Sununu took all criticism as implacable hostility and, further, an implicit admission of stupidity. "He's a smart guy, but he thinks he's the smartest guy in the world," says Paul Young, the former executive director of the New Hampshire Republican Party. "His attitude is that everyone who questions him is not as bright as he is." And anyone who actually crossed him had to be destroyed. "You just don't disagree with King John," explains Chuck Douglas, a conservative New Hampshire Republican. "It's an immutable law, like gravity. If you do, it becomes a jihad for the rest of recorded history."

In the mid-eighties, Douglas, then a justice on the state supreme court, drifted into the governor's cross hairs. His crimes were manifold. First, Douglas wrote the opinion in a unanimous decision of the court which ruled that Sununu had acted illegally by appropriating $1 million in state funds to purchase computers for the school system from a local firm without legislative authorization. Later, after entering private practice, Douglas defended two mid-level state employees who were fired by Sununu because he wanted to fill their positions with political friends; Douglas won the case and got them reinstated. "I was not able to be placed under his thumb," says Douglas. "It really drove him up the wall." The vendetta was on.

In 1988, when Douglas announced he would run for Congress, Sununu helped set up a primary challenger. He assigned his deputy and press secretary to run the opponent's campaign, and even appeared in her TV ads. When his nemesis won, Sununu's rage only grew.

They carried their duel into that year's G.O.P. primary, with Sununu managing the state for Bush while Douglas served as campaign chairman for Representative Jack Kemp. Douglas tried to show up Sununu (and indirectly Bush) by publicizing the fact that he was the only governor in the country to refuse to sign a statement condemning the notorious United Nations resolution equating Zionism with racism (finally rescinded a month ago). Still, Sununu refused to sign it; an embarrassed George Bush declined comment.

King John's power depended on iron-fisted political control and the state's prosperity. His tenure happened to coincide with the biggest expansion of the New Hampshire economy in its history. Much of the New Hampshire Miracle was a spillover of the Massachusetts Miracle next door. The high-tech boom rolled across the state line and Massachusetts's affluence stimulated large land purchases in New Hampshire, especially vacation properties. Realtors and banks—and Sununu—flourished.

In the early eighties, the governor had lobbied Reagan to appoint him secretary of energy (overseeing nuclear power), but had been rebuffed. With the 1988 campaign inevitably to be funneled through New Hampshire, Sununu grasped that this was his main—perhaps his last—chance to clamber into the national drama. The timing was ideal: despite the state's sudden wealth and his overbearing authority, Sununu's re-election was no sure thing. "He was cognizant that a lot of people wanted to see him fall in New Hampshire," says a Republican operative. "He could have suffered a big defeat. With Bush, he had a good lily pad to jump to."

A year before the primary, Sununu forged an alliance with Bush's campaign manager, Lee Atwater, the youthful South Carolinian who could play as rough as Sununu but was far more tactically inventive. It was Atwater who

brokered Sununu's endorsement of Bush, though the governor's backing of the front-runner, Reagan's heir apparent, was never much in doubt.

On the eve of the Republican primary, in the sanctum of the governor's office, a friend found Sununu lost in thought. Bush had just suffered an excruciating defeat in the Iowa caucuses, limping in third, behind not only Senator Bob Dole but also televangelist Pat Robertson. All the years of Bush's sublimation of political desire in the hope of consummation in the presidency had come to rest on the result of the upcoming primary. The vice president was giddy with panic, in a place that haunted him with a specter of mortification: it was here that he had been trounced by Reagan in 1980. Bush's dependence on his principal supporter, Governor John Sununu, was therefore complete. Bush's predicament was awful, suggested Sununu's friend, breaking the silence. "Yeah," replied Sununu, "isn't it great? Don't you see how much good I'm going to be able to do for the next president of the United States?"

The governor called in every chit for his candidate. He ordered his army of political appointees to canvass the streets. (Sununu, speaking through a White House press officer, says his staff campaigned for Bush on their own time.) He also sat in on the anxious strategy meetings that decided on presenting a new image of Bush, as a Man of the People, putting him behind the wheel of a snowplow, which he drove a few yards in a parking lot for a photo opportunity. Bob Dole was trashed with negative ads depicting him as "Senator Straddle" on taxes, a fatal flaw in a state that prides itself on having no personal income or general sales taxes. Sununu's role in Bush's subsequent victory was central, but it did not make him a beloved figure in New Hampshire. A campaign button resurfaced featuring his picture and the caption "Will Rogers Never Met This Man."

The next target had been on Sununu's enemies list for years: Michael Dukakis, the governor of neighboring Massachusetts and the Democratic candidate for president. Sununu loathed Dukakis, who was, in some ways, his mirror image: another ethnic technocrat who believed, above all, in his superior intelligence and had trouble listening to others. In 1986 the *Boston Herald* had conducted a poll showing that Dukakis would beat Sununu if they were paired in a race for governor of New Hampshire. According to a source close to Dukakis, this poll was among the factors that persuaded Dukakis that he had broader appeal and should run for president.

Part of the Massachusetts governor's strength in New Hampshire was due to his early opposition to Sununu's pet project, Seabrook. Being anti-Sununu made Dukakis the Granite State Democrats' favorite son. For Sununu, now rewarded with the Bush campaign's co-chairmanship, the presidential contest was an opportunity to settle old scores. Against Dukakis, he consistently urged the harshest, most vicious attacks. Sununu virtually moved to Washington, working out of Atwater's office. "They appreciated each other's mad-dog sense," recalls a political consultant. And Sununu became the most reliable surrogate carrying the negative message against Dukakis.

Sununu believed his services would be rewarded with the vice presidency. But at the Republican convention in New Orleans, Bush surprised nearly everyone by unveiling Dan Quayle. "How come they picked Quayle?" a close friend asked the disappointed governor. "I think," he replied, according to the friend, "that the Jews went against me." (When asked if Sununu said this, the White House press officer responds, "Absolutely not.")

The consolation prize was the position as chief of staff. The new president never saw the job as anything but a political one. Bush wanted someone who was willing to perform the mean work of politics, someone who would gladly sweat, kick, and bite for him. Robert Teeter, a moderate, scholarly pollster, was James Baker's choice. But Bush wanted his own politico, completely his own, to serve what would be a supremely political presidency. Sununu's appointment was a rebuff to Teeter and Baker. Rather than smoothing over relations, however, the new chief of staff decided the far more influential Baker was an enemy. According to a reliable source, when the early media profiles of the new chief of staff noted Sununu's refusal to sign the statement condemning the U.N. Zionism-is-racism resolution, he was convinced that it was Baker who had planted it.

The powers of the chief of staff are only those granted by the occupant of the Oval Office. Although he oversees all White House operations, from personnel to press, his success depends upon keeping one rule in mind: he is there to serve. Sununu understood that Bush was the one who had been elected president. But he seemed to feel that he shared in that mandate because he had helped Bush at a critical juncture. And, unlike all his recent predecessors, Sununu had been an elected official in his own right. He was a staffer who had not been just a staffer. When the new chief of staff was asked, at the press conference where Bush announced his appointment, who his model would be, Sununu did not name James Baker or Dick Cheney, who had successfully served Presidents Reagan and Ford. Instead, he named a past governor of New Hampshire, Sherman Adams, who had been Eisenhower's chief of staff—a haughty figure who became known as "the abominable 'no' man" and was forced to resign in scandal (after accepting a vicuña coat, among other things, from a businessman).

Sununu's ascendancy was due more to fierce ambition than to the recognition of the merits of his much-touted, genius-level I.Q. of 180 (the score he earned on a mail-in I.Q. test he filled out in *Omni* magazine). He had shoved and grabbed, cursed and threatened his way up. In New Hampshire, his ambition had walked an ethical tightrope. He used state aircraft for his own, unexplained purposes. (When this was exposed, the state police began keeping passenger records, which they later mysteriously lost.) He reportedly accepted fancy suits from a political-favor seeker. (Sununu flatly denies this, but one source says he's seen Sununu actually wearing the suits.) And with the expectation that he would secure an appointment in Bush's administration, he conducted one last round of fundraising for his re-election campaign; through a legal loophole he was able to use the proceeds as a personal fund. "He was always pushing it," says a New Hampshire Republican who worked with him. "He was not a crook, just on the margins."

But politics provided more than an opportunity to gratify his appetites. By becoming ever more powerful, he was leaving his humiliations behind him.

Sununu was intent on frustrating the Civil Rights Bill so Bush might have a "quota" issue to play in 1992.

AIR SUNUNU
After the planes and limos, the chief of staff was finally grounded.

When he moved his very traditional wife, Nancy, and his eight children to Washington, it was more than a change of residence. He was taking a long stride toward overcoming his foreign birth, his un-Waspy name, his height, his weight.

Those who knew Sununu in New Hampshire wondered how he would be able to deal with the "multiple constituencies" of Washington, as one of them put it. Governor Sununu had specialized in courting the Executive Council, a constituency of five. He was used to Republican majorities in a weak legislature. "He had no idea how to cope with a Democratic Congress."

Sununu repeatedly spoke of having a "constituency of one," by which he meant President Bush. This was a truism. But he had another cornerstone that was essential to maintaining his power: Lee Atwater, the Republican National Committee chairman. Together, Atwater and Sununu controlled Bush's political apparatus. They freely exchanged personnel: Atwater's chief campaign deputy, Ed Rogers, became Sununu's executive assistant. And they had seven A.M. breakfast meetings three days a week to plot strategy.

Atwater was a term-life-insurance policy for Sununu. The R.N.C. chairman enjoyed access to the state parties and long-standing ties to congressional leaders. It would be very difficult to wound Sununu mortally as long as Atwater was in place. The chief of staff presented himself as the conservative voice within the administration, but, as he had in New Hampshire, he mistreated conservatives while manipulating them. They were not his main support outside the Oval Office. Atwater was. And Atwater knew that this administration wasn't about ideology—it was about sheer pragmatism. He too understood how to manipulate the conservatives, along with every other counter on the board. Still, no matter how much he could do for Sununu, Atwater could not alter the chief of staff's personality.

As soon as Sununu arrived in Washington, he began methodically alienating nearly every center of power. He started with the Cabinet members. Robert Mosbacher, a dapper oilman from Texas who had known the president for years and had served as Bush's campaign finance chairman, was the new secretary of commerce. Somehow he had gotten the impression that he controlled the political plums within his own department. Sununu disabused him of this notion, forcing several patronage appointments on him. "Mosbacher went insane," recalls a source privy to the affair. "It was a *big* rift."

What he did to Mosbacher on patronage, he did to all the others. He undermined their policies and verbally abused them in Cabinet meetings. He was intent on frustrating the Civil Rights Bill so that the president might have a "quota" issue to play in the 1992 campaign. He blocked Health and Human Services Secretary Louis Sullivan, the only black Cabinet member, from speaking to the president on civil rights. Joining with Richard Darman, the director of the Office of Management and Budget, Sununu destroyed all efforts to create an industrial policy. Mosbacher, for example, was forced to retreat on his proposal to develop a U.S. plan for high-definition television. Sununu prevented the president from taking a stand on global warming, and he generally undercut environmental regulation. He called Environmental Protection Agency head William Reilly at seven in the morning to scream obscenities at him. Proposals to fund housing for the poor, advanced by Housing and Urban Development Secretary Jack Kemp, were cast aside. Secretary of the Treasury Nicholas Brady, a close friend of Bush's, finally declared in a meeting that he was "sick" of being denigrated by Sununu.

Part of Sununu's emphatic negativity was traceable to his negative temperament; part of it had its source in his relationship with the budget director, who used the chief of staff to control spending. But Sununu was on a long leash, held at the other end by the president. He was George Bush's pit bull.

Sununu plowed on, alienating all sorts of natural Republican allies. "I'll chainsaw your balls off!" he shouted at Dick Lesher, the president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, over some now forgotten point. But his treatment of Congress was perhaps his most astonishing performance of all. "I don't care what you're saying! I'm not interested in anything you have to say!" he yelled at Representative Lindsay Thomas, a Democrat from Georgia, who was explaining his position on wetlands protection to a group of about twenty-five colleagues. Sununu slammed shut a book of photographs Thomas was showing, just missing his hand. "That's a really stupid question," he told another congressman. "It's obvious you don't understand the issue," he lectured another. "What are you smoking?" he shouted at yet another.

"One by one, they began to be brutalized by John," says Chuck Douglas, Sununu's old adversary, newly elected to the House. *(Continued on page 168)*

SPOTLIGHT

Belinda's Baby

Belinda Carlisle has had a heart-shaped career, pierced with a poison arrow or two. As lead singer of the Go-Go's, she conveyed chirpiness as a philosophy of life. With its candy chords and pastel harmonies, this all-girl L.A. band rode the backwash of the Beach Boys' eternal summer. Their songs rippled from the radio sounding both nostalgic and shiny-new, like sun-faded glossies. Her image hasn't escaped without scratches. A bootleg video surfaced on cable TV showing her and the Go-Go's trying to arouse a limp groupie. And despite her commitment to AIDS research and animal rights, her marriage to Republican hotshot Morgan Mason miffed the P.C. music press. Says Carlisle, "I was so fucked up I didn't know what a Republican was." Now she realizes they walk among us, as amazingly lifelike as you or me.

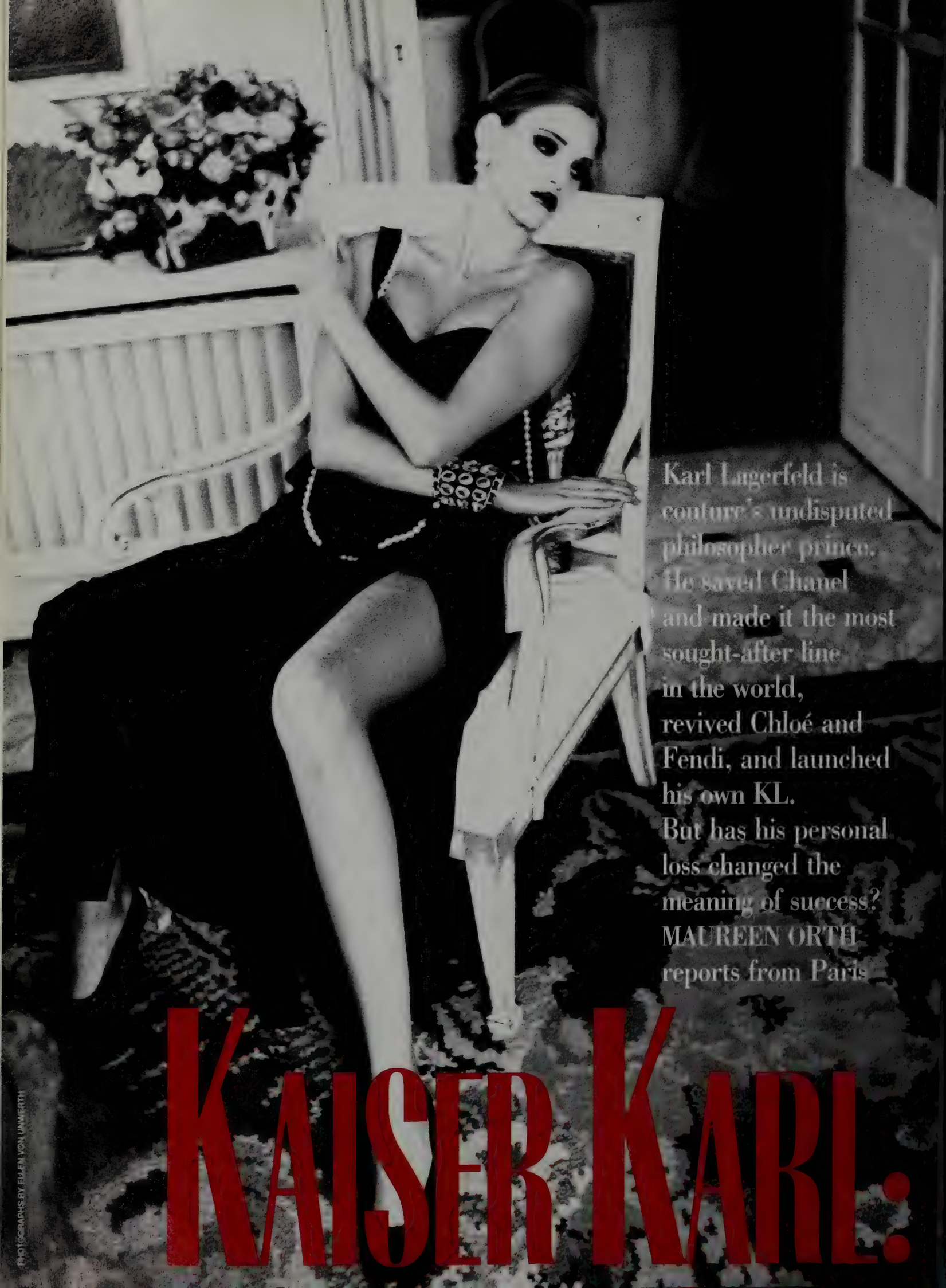
It might be said that Carlisle, expecting her first child with Mason in May, has gone from Go-Go's to "goo-goo." (*Mass groan.*) Although her pregnancy forced her to postpone a tour to promote her latest solo album, *Live Your Life Be Free*, she climbed a circular staircase for the video of "I Plead Insanity," leaving her pooped. "Now I can get fat and relax," she says of the downshift from stardom to momdom. But the fickle nature of the music biz keeps her from becoming too mellow. Faced with rock videos featuring fog machines and frenzied dancers, she wonders, "Am I passé?" Perish the thought. As long as pop music has a sweet tooth, there'll be a place for her on the car stereo. —JAMES WOLCOTT

Photograph by WAYNE MASER

STYLED BY JEANNINE BRADEN. HAIR BY KATHERINA EHRHARDT FOR CÉLESTINE; MAKEUP BY JO STRETTELL FOR TRISH McEVOY; STOLE BY DOLCE & GABBANA

BELINDA CARLISLE

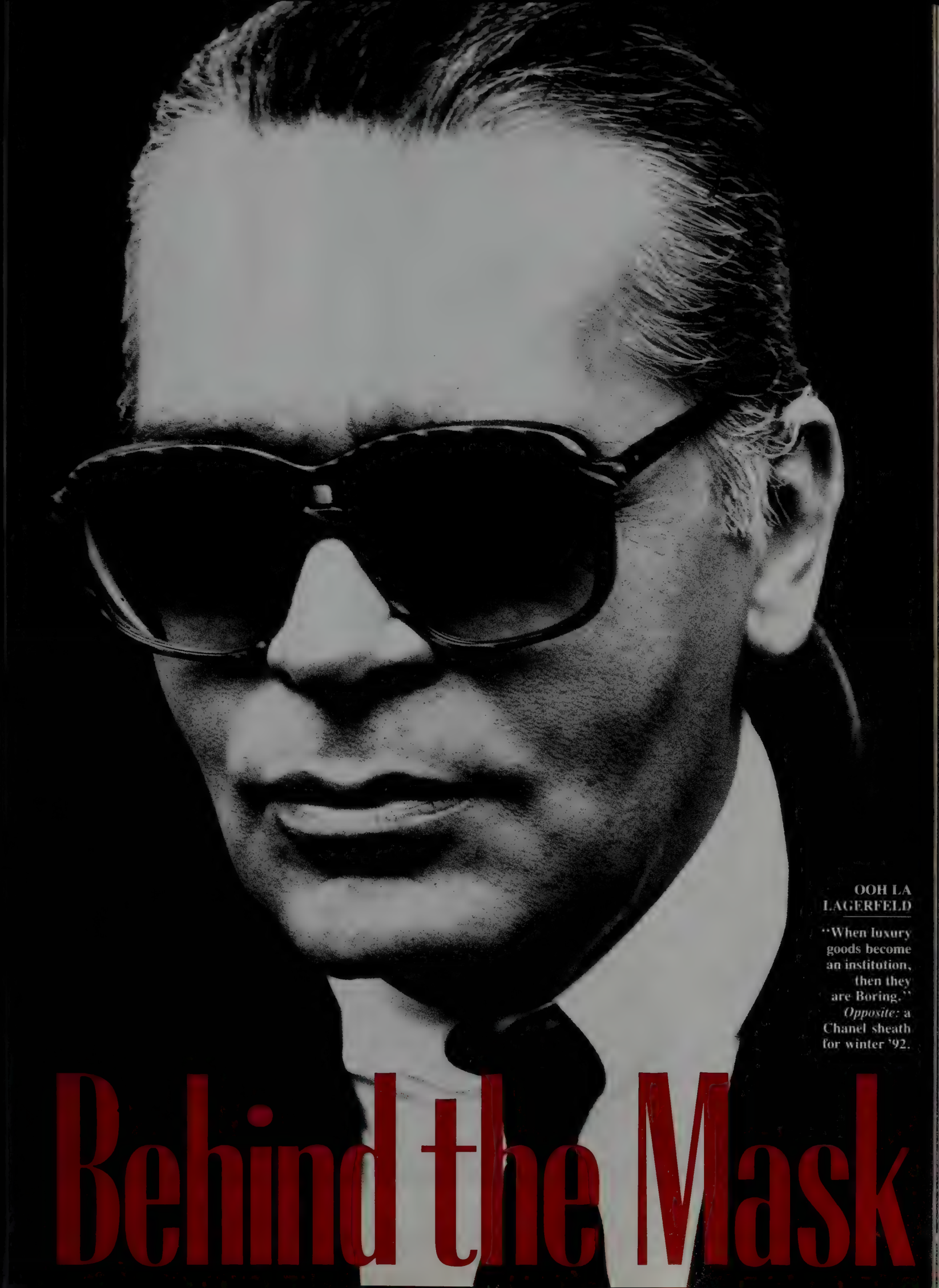
As long as pop music has a sweet tooth, there'll be a place for her on the car stereo.



Karl Lagerfeld is couture's undisputed philosopher prince. He saved Chanel and made it the most sought-after line in the world, revived Chloé and Fendi, and launched his own KL. But has his personal loss changed the meaning of success? MAUREEN ORTH reports from Paris

KAISER KARL:

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ELLEN VON UNWERTH



Behind the Mask

OOH LA LAGERFELD

"When luxury goods become an institution, then they are Boring." *Opposite:* a Chanel sheath for winter '92.

PHOTOGRAPHS: LEFT, BY HELMUT NEWTON; RIGHT, BY KARL LAGERFELD

The pudgy little hand is pounding the Louis XV table, rattling the delicate porcelain and threatening to upset the shimmering vermeil flatware. "I'd prefer to have my success before me now, not behind me for twenty years, like other people." Karl Lagerfeld's piercing dark eyes are minus their usual cover of tinted glasses, though his Chanel make-up is on. "My past should only be addressed the minute I'm not part of it anymore and I stop doing what I'm doing," he says vehemently.

The referent names are not so much as whispered over lunch in German-born Lagerfeld's ornate Paris apartment, but two nights earlier the world-wide fashion elite and all of Paris society turned out for the opening of a forty-year retrospective of the work of Hubert de Givenchy. And in June, Valentino had commemorated his thirty years in fashion with a multimillion-dollar bash in Rome. "I hate this idea," *bang*, "as if all those people are going to their own funeral," *thump*, "I think it's a nightmare," *whack*, "the worst habit," *whack, whack*, and "it's strange it's only done by not very trendy designers, eh?"

A few minutes earlier the subject was Yves Saint Laurent, who is widely considered in Paris to have slipped precipitously of late, but whose image is carefully controlled to make it appear he is in torture for his art. "Look, you want his life? Of course not, eh? I mean, I hear Yves is suffering, but you cannot suffer and bring out the same collection every six months." Then, between bites of hot fish salad and sips of Diet Coke, "I stopped seeing him already fifteen years ago, because they [YSL and his powerful partner, Pierre Bergé] all changed completely, but I don't like to talk about those people. I am uninterested, because they're not very trendy anymore, so really, huh . . ."

For the ponytailed, fifty-three-year-old Lagerfeld, not to be trendy is a most unfortunate condition: it signifies that you are B and the *B*-word, in the heady sphere of K.L., also signifies banishment. The most powerful designer of the moment states his fashion philoso-

"I'm an intelligent opportunist. I like the idea

MUSICAL CHAIRS

Lagerfeld's homage to Mozart, in a guest room at his residence outside Paris. *Opposite:* it was "*amour absolu*" for Lagerfeld and the late Jacques de Bascher, photographed in 1985 by Helmut Newton.

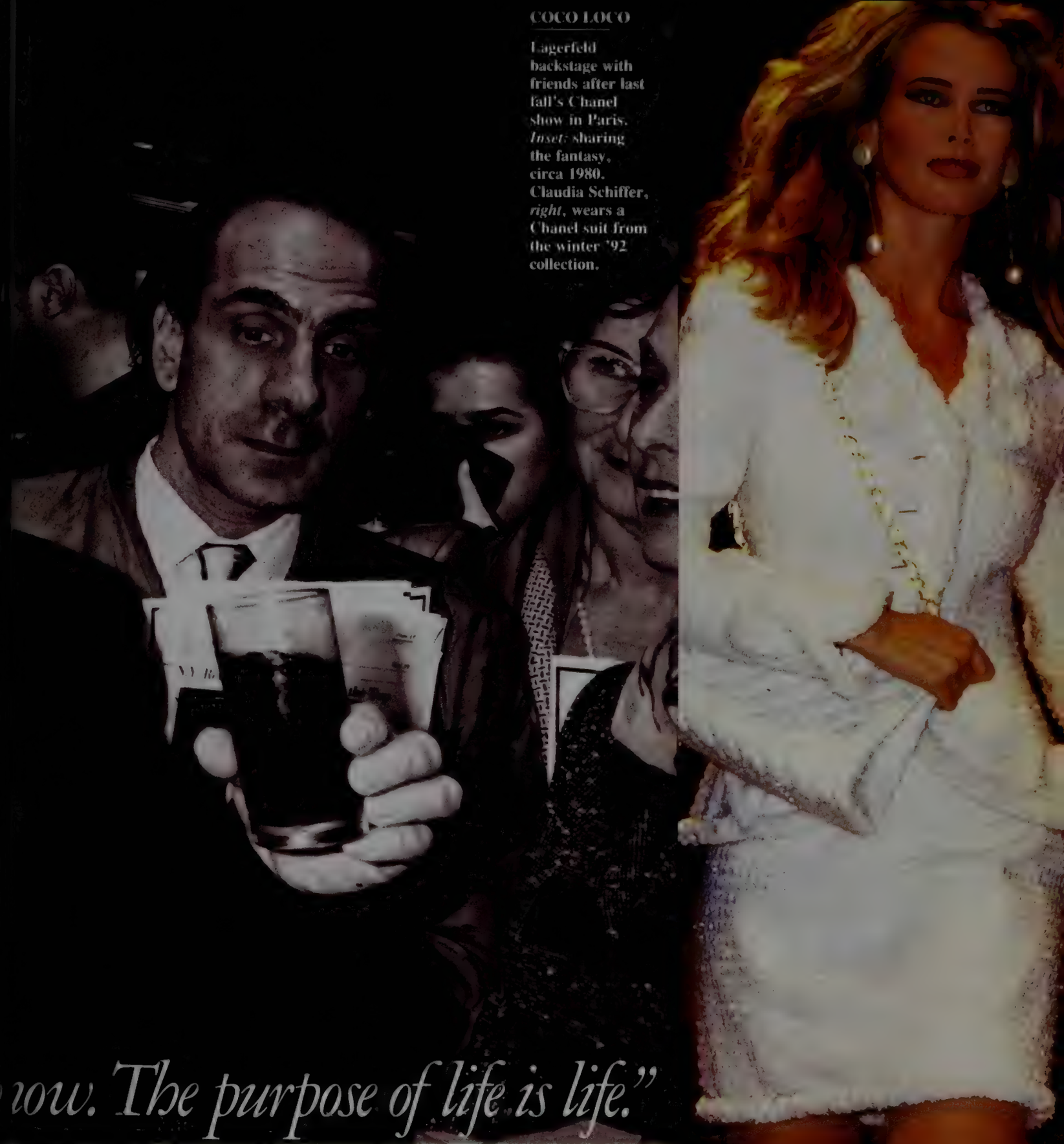
of doing things you're not supposed to do."

"What I leave behind I don't care—paradise

phy with a final *bang*. "When luxury goods become an institution, then they are Boring."

Nobody watching the witty Lagerfeld at work "deconstructing" Chanel just before he showed his spring collection in Paris would immediately think institutional. It was more likely that Coco, who died in 1971, was rolling over in her grave. Her simple chain belts now had three descending tiers hung with a big fig leaf that banged right against the G spot. Her famous ropes of pearls were being reinvented in two new sizes: Ping-Pong-ball and golf-ball. There were Chanel cutoff jeans in bright-colored denim for $400 and quilted bags in traditional blue denim that the staff whispered would be fobbed off on the Japanese; her tasteful suits were in clingy stretch fabric, or shown in terry cloth for the beach, and worn with Minnie Mouse platform heels with cork soles. And just in case there was not enough product ID, Chanel's quilted eye shadow came in a case the exact same shape as the top of the famous perfume bottles.

"I'm an intelligent opportunist," Lagerfeld proclaims. "In fashion you have to be. Pierre Bergé says about me, 'He's not a designer, he's a mercenary.'



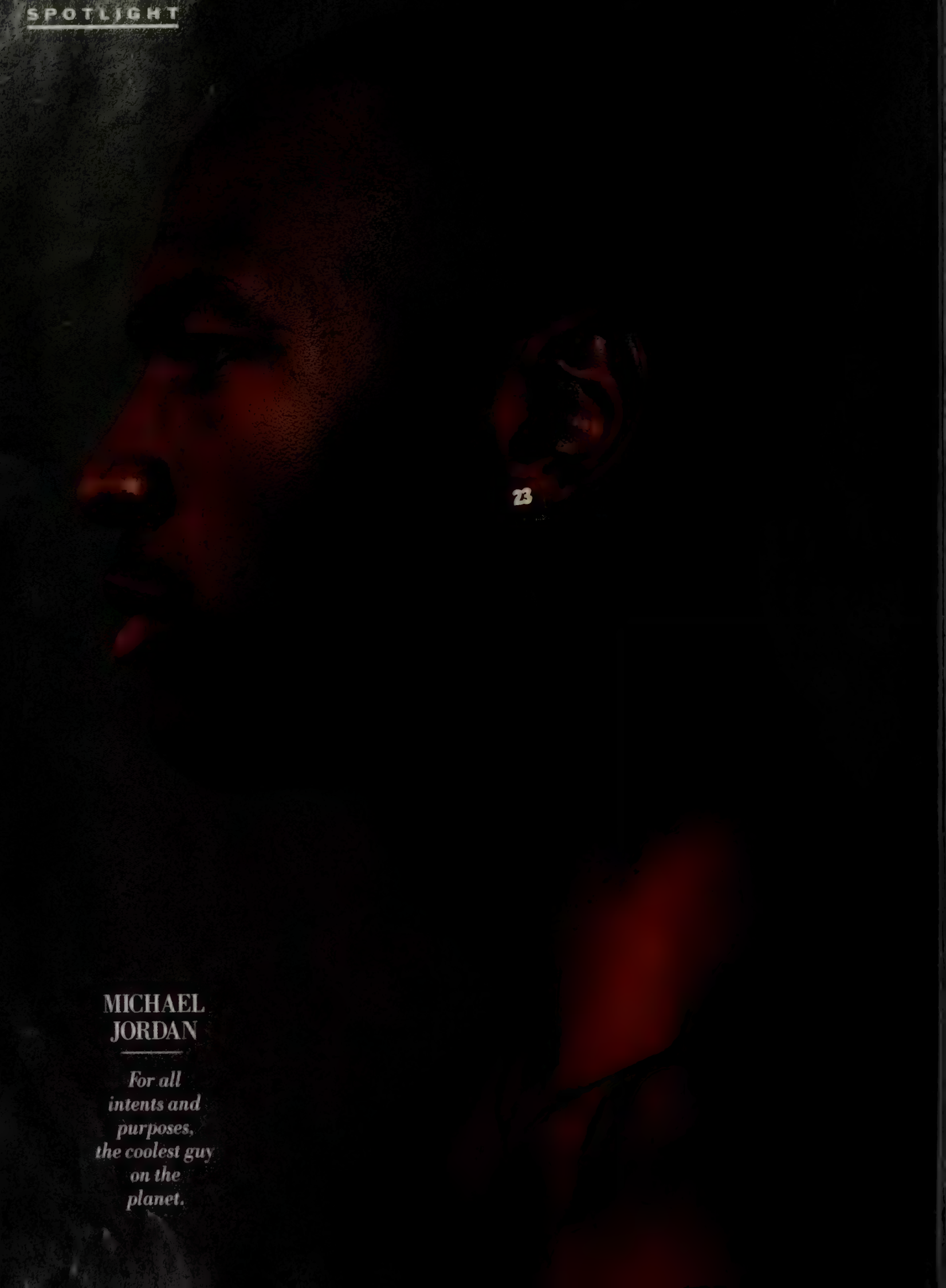
COCO LOCO

Lagerfeld backstage with friends after last fall's Chanel show in Paris. *Inset:* sharing the fantasy, circa 1980. Claudia Schiffer, *right*, wears a Chanel suit from the winter '92 collection.

...ow. The purpose of life is life."

I like the idea of doing things you're not supposed to do." In sixteen collections a year—for Chanel, Fendi, his own Karl Lagerfeld signature line, and Trevira fabrics, Lagerfeld labors ceaselessly to get onto the charts in a field even more fickle than pop music.

He has been wildly successful. "When Lagerfeld took over the Chanel collections, they had one foot in the grave and the other on a banana peel—it was Seconal City," says Marian McEvoy, editor of *Elle Decor*, who used to cover them. The old-line Chanel dressed the wives of industrialists and French ministers. Today, according to Barbara Cirkva, who heads the Chanel boutiques in America, "the average age of the customer has dropped from the mid-fifties to between thirty-five and forty-five." There are Chanel boutiques in Nashville *(Continued on page 157)*



MICHAEL JORDAN

For all intents and purposes, the coolest guy on the planet.

We Like Mike

There are times when Michael Jordan is mortal. He scoops up a shot that shimmies around the rim before sliding out, or hums a pass that's too optimistic about a teammate's speed. But these are the moments that surprise you. The rest of the time, Jordan is what he seems to be: the reigning prince of midair, a dizzying blur of muscle groups you need instant replay to sort out, the world's first twenty-second-century athlete—for all intents and purposes, the coolest guy on the planet. His haircut is the ultimate in aerodynamics, and his physique is constructed out of rubber and steel, part Gumby and part Terminator 2. (Few elite athletes can carve themselves down to 7 percent body fat—he sports 3.) The roar of his sneakers has created a new world order on the court. He is dangerous on the dance floor, slaloming through defenders, juking and jiving into hyperspace, and dropping from the rafters for a teeth-rattling, rim-rocking slam dunk.

Though he currently has his cross hairs zeroed in on a second N.B.A. championship and a third M.V.P. trophy, Jordan is much more than a shooting star. He hosted the most-watched *Saturday Night Live* season premiere (with cameos by fellow black-world all-stars Public Enemy, Spike Lee, and Jesse Jackson), and his Kid Who Ate the Hershey Bar smile lights up TV ads for Coca-Cola and Nike ("Look, Mom, I can fly!"). A shoe-in if he ever downshifts to run for president, Jordan is so popular that he has inspired the most naked slogan in celebrity-advertising history, in spots for Gatorade: Be Like Mike. If we only could.—MICHAEL CARUSO

Photographs by ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

FOOTFALLS IN THE CRYPT

By Norman Mailer

President Kennedy slumps forward, mortally wounded.

Oliver Stone's new movie, *JFK*, has something to alienate everyone, from Establishment theorists to the gamut of conspiracy buffs. But as NORMAN MAILER writes, by daring to plumb the depths of America's nightmare obsession on the big screen, the controversial director has posed some very unsettling questions

What is one to make of *JFK*? It is not routine to take it on, for Oliver Stone presents a nice problem in critical assessment. These years, when the best film directors have preferred to ignore the largest themes, Stone has gone bucking ahead with all the full-backed intensity of a heavyweight willing to endanger his body against any opponent.

Platoon, his first major success, is an example. Its story barely holds together, yet there is no need for the film to do more. Stone, better than anyone before, is showing us what it is like to endure the physical misery of a patrol on a jungle trail. The minute-by-minute experience of slime, bugs, exhaustion, and occasional combat is conveyed; by the unspoken logic of film, that is enough. Good films need be no better than good or interesting one-night stands. They do not have to change our lives, provided they show us something we had not known before. *Platoon* did that. It offered a sense-filled correlative for what veterans of the South Pacific and Vietnam had been trying to explain for a long time. Since it also had the advantage of a fine job by Tom Berenger and a performance by Charlie Sheen that grew as it went along, *Platoon* worked.

So did *Wall Street*, if at a lower level. Michael Douglas, Daryl Hannah, Charlie Sheen, and Martin Sheen did responsible work, but the story, drawn from the history of a couple of financial worthies who made newspaper headlines for their white-collar crimes, was a contrivance, the cinematography was conventional, and the moral was homiletic. It

Illustration by PHILIP BURKE

seemed apparent that Stone, whatever his willingness, was not a man with a vocation for irony.

Born on the Fourth of July, however, came near to being a great movie. It gave us a view of the torture rack that bound those Americans who went over to Vietnam with a set of conventional beliefs, only to return with no conviction more fiercely held than that morality was equal to surrealism. In one of the best scenes ever filmed in any American movie, Willem Dafoe and Tom Cruise, marooned in their wheelchairs on a clay-dirt road in clay-red Mexican mountains, commence to argue over who has actually shot a baby in Vietnam and who is merely pretending to have it on his conscience. Before the verbal duel is over, each is spitting in the other's face. The wheelchairs tangle, fall over, and the two paraplegics wrestle on the ground, enraged that the other will not believe that, yes, I am guilty of a greater horror than you. Tumbling down together into a gully, they lie half-conscious in the dust, helpless to move, and never are we more aware of their broken spines. That scene captures as much of the war in Vietnam as did Coppola's Valkyrie ride of helicopters in *Apocalypse Now*. Yes, *Born on the Fourth of July* was close to being a great movie, but the logic of its inner development was tenuous, and so, despite Cruise's exceptional performance as Ron Kovic, we were only partially convinced that he ends as a radical. Yet what a large and ambitious attempt had Stone undertaken. The size of the gamble underwrote the cruder means. Lack of fear can take an artist into places his skill does not permit.

> The first thing to be said about *JFK* is that it is a great movie, and the next is that it is one of the worst great movies ever made.

By the time Stone made *The Doors*, he must, given his box-office successes, have been choked with hubris. *The Doors* has to be one of the truly bad movies of all time, albeit with a prodigious distinction, for it is also virtuoso. It has not one mass scene, but three dozen. Since the demands on a film crew shooting a single mass scene are uncountable, the toll on assistant directors must have been catastrophic. *The Doors*, almost two and a half hours long, probably has two hours of scenes with fifty to five hundred extras. It provides us with the experience of a rock world, but at the harsh cost of living in it. Half-glimpsed wonders of a half-muttered and half-uttered Dionysian life just about convert us to the Apollonian.

It is possible, given Stone's enormous ambition to take on none but the largest American themes, that he had decided this once (since rock's apocalyptic promise to break through into a brave new consciousness was now two decades dead) that he would shift his interest from wild frontiers onto unparalleled technical difficulties; he certainly brought that much off. At a time when other directors, for lack of heart or certainty of theme, have all been heading toward technical splendor, *The Doors* goes even further into kaleidoscopic cinematography. All of Stone's faults, however, were compounded—his lack of grasp for what a good script can be, his heavy-handed hold on mystical states, and his disjunctive narrative sense of how protagonists can grow, or be destroyed. It may be that the virtue of *The Doors* is that it cleared the decks for something larger.

We come, then, to *JFK*. It is the boldest work yet of a bold and clumsy man, but the first thing to be said about it is that it is a great movie, and the next is that it is one of the worst great movies ever made. It is great in spite of itself, and such greatness owes more to the moxie of the director than to his special talents. Nonetheless, it is an incomparable experience which moves into parts of our heart that we have anesthetized for years.

So one's first judgment is that it cannot be discussed as just a film; it is not of the first interest to talk about where *JFK* works cinematically and where it does not. One does better to treat it as a psychic phenomenon, a creature in the dream life of the nation, and this is legitimate; film, at its most compelling, lives in our mind somewhere between our memories and our dreams. One of the most advanced art forms of the twentieth century is, therefore, one of the most primitive as well, or, at least, such a claim can be invoked when we are dealing with the sinister edge of serious film on a large screen in a dark theater. In that sense, Stone's instinct proved superb.

Subjects as heroic in scope as J.F.K. can be as uniquely suited to film as is a good kill to a tribe of hunters, and if the prize was obtained at considerable peril to the chief hunter, then it barely matters how the meat is cooked. Need, and the nature of the exploit, flavors the repast.

JFK is bound to receive some atrocious reviews, perhaps even a preponderance of unfavorable ones, and, as has been the case already, more than a small outrage is likely to be aroused in the Washington Club (that is, *The Washington Post*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, the F.B.I., the C.I.A., the Pentagon, the White House, and the TV networks on those occasions when they wish to exercise their guest privileges). The Establishment has found that Oswald-as-the-lone-assassin serves a multitude of useful purposes, in much the way that a public figure who wraps himself in propriety, no matter how greasy his private life may be, has a dependable political seat. Studying such prizes on television, we know they lie—the gross and subtle folds of corruption on the average senatorial face are hardly the lineaments of virtue—but we can also recall that nobody who played at being a

puritan during the Thomas-Hill hearings had to move off his dime. Rectitude planted all the flags.

Ditto for the lone assassin. The F.B.I. was the first to endorse the idea, and this but two weeks after the death of J.F.K. In 1964 the Warren Commission came down four-square behind that finding. Over the years, however, the Warren Commission lost its credibility. The polls give the figure: a majority of Americans now believe there was more than one killer. That, however, is naught but belief. It is the actions of men that make history, and the majority of action in this case has been taken over by the Washington Club—they have circled their wagons around the lone assassin.

It does not matter that in 1978 the House Select Committee on Assassinations decided, on the basis of the acoustic evidence, that there had been a fourth shot. Since it was agreed that no rifleman, no matter how skilled, could get off four aimed rounds from a Mannlicher-Carcano bolt-action rifle in 5.6 seconds, that meant there had to be a second assassin. While this opened a fell crack in the granite wall of lone-assassin solidarity, the committee's thirty-month mandate expired even as it was making the discovery, and its work was not extended. Instead, the Department of Justice was handed its files, with a full invitation to look into the new findings. The Department of Justice and the F.B.I. are still looking—that is about equal to saying that the files pertaining to the case have presumably not been destroyed. Of course, about as much may now be left of such documents as still adheres to an automobile after it has been abandoned on a slum street in the South Bronx. And the House committee's own backup records and unpublished transcripts have been sealed as "congressional material." They won't be made public until the year 2029. We may be witting to the all-but-absolute certainty of a fourth shot by a second assassin, but we are still living in the land of upper maintenance men; they look to keep their establishment intact. So in 1988 the Department of Justice announced that the House committee had misinterpreted the acoustic evidence. How not? The price is too prodigious if there was more than one demented gunman. Two assassins not only have to be able to function in concert, but, by their effectiveness itself, suggest a support system, which is to say a larger conspiracy.

At this point, many an old horror arises. Did Castro have a hand in it? the American left must try not to ask itself again. No, of course not, he had too sure a sense of the consequences is the reflexive reply, but then, who can be certain that individual members of the D.G.I., Castro's intelligence service, had not been engaged in some mutually deceptive game with Cuban exiles in Florida and Texas? Even worse for the national polity is that our political center must ask itself, Could Lyndon Johnson, who, we now seem to be learning, was capable of just about any deed, have ordered it? Certainly not, replies the center, and just as reflexively. Yet how could Lyndon Johnson, even if wholly innocent, have ever been certain that some of that bold Texas money, nudging him through the years, had not decided to take a flier on its native son? Nor could Richard Nixon be certain of immaculate innocence. He had been in contact with Cuban exiles for many years, and some of them had not been without murderous ideas. Could the C.I.A. know its own stables were clean after their hit-man dealings with the Mafia? Rogue elephants were capable of fancy steps that put ballet dancers to shame. And then, for that matter, who was Oswald? By now, there is more evidence to suggest that he was sent to Russia as a ploy of U.S. intelligence than that he went over on his own. Could the Pentagon afford to look closely into its most special contingents? Could the F.B.I. live with a second rifle after all these years of being signally unable to improve on the absurd tale of one gun? Could those headmasters of the Washington Club's conscience, *The Washington Post* and its often concordant satellites, *Time* and *Newsweek*, live with an unresolved conspiracy after being for decades loyal apostles of the lone assassin? No, it was to the interest of left, center, and right to remain unaffected by the House select committee's findings. Even if, in light of the new evidence, a second assassin could not be denied, it had to be realized, when you got down to it, that a lone assassin was what we had been living with all along. Headmasters do not traffic with the novel and the unforeseen.

When Oliver Stone charged, therefore, in full panoply with all his filmmaking teams and equipment into the valley of assassination enlightenment, there were heavy guns emplaced on the right, and on his left were all the inflamed ragtag assassination buffs. They had been working in relative solitude for decades, laboring on in the private, inspired, and isolated hope that one day they would uncover the mystery and be renowned forever.

It was a fantasy. The best and most skilled of the assassination buffs knew as much by now. To the degree that the murder of J.F.K. was a conspiracy, so could one assume that the most salient evidence and the most inconvenient witnesses had been removed long ago. Yet a buff could only persevere. It had become one's life. It had become, so far as the universal need for personal power is concerned, a way of life. If one could not solve the assassination, one could at least mow down the theories of other researchers who tried to squat in proximity to the barren acres of one's own land grab.

So, the parvenu, Oliver Stone, endowed with all the wealth, muscle, and arrogance of a $35-to-$40-million budget, and no great willingness to become enmeshed with the majority of assassination buffs, naturally encountered trouble on both flanks. The buffs might not have been a well-organized army like the Washington Club—no, by comparison, they were Bushmen with blowguns—but some of them were ready to collaborate with the big guns on the right.

The attacks began before movie shooting even commenced. George Lardner Jr., the resident writer on intelligence matters for *The Washington Post* (which is to say the friend and confidant of many an F.B.I. and C.I.A. man), obtained a stolen copy of the *JFK* script, and did a long piece about Stone for the Club on May 19, 1991.

His hero: former New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison, whose zany investigation of the assassination in the late 1960s has almost faded from memory. . . Oliver Stone is chasing fiction. Garrison's investigation was a fraud.

Stone has said that he considers himself a "cinematic historian" and has called the assassination "the seminal event of my generation." But Harold Weisberg, a longtime critic of the FBI and Warren Commission investigations of the assassination

. . . protests, "To do a mishmash like this is out of love for the victim and respect for history? I think people who sell sex have more principle."

. . . D.A. Costner assails the murder as a "coup d'état"—hold your breath—ordered by "a shadow government consisting of corrupt men at the highest levels of the Pentagon, the intelligence establishment and the great multinational corporations," carried out by elements of the intelligence community and covered up "by like-minded individuals in the Dallas Police Department, the Secret Service, the F.B.I., and the White House—all the way up to and including J. Edgar Hoover and Lyndon Johnson, whom I consider accomplices after the fact."

The screenplay ends the Sunday Oswald was killed with a White House scene of Johnson meeting with his Vietnam advisers. "He signs something unseen" and tells them, "Gentlemen, I want you to know I'm personally committed to Vietnam, I'm not going to take one soldier out of there till they know we mean business in Asia."

That is nonsense. . . . All the hoopla, of course, will obscure the absurdities and palpable untruths in Garrison's book and Stone's rendition of it.

The manuscript smuggled over to Lardner had been a first draft, and Stone and his co-writer, Zachary Sklar, were to rewrite the script five times. Stone would later reply, "I've taken the license of using Garrison as a metaphor for all the credible researchers. Lardner. . . narrows the focus of the picture to his enmity for Garrison, whereas this is not the specific Jim Garrison but an all-encompassing figure."

Played by Kevin Costner in restrained and dignified fashion, the Jim Garrison of the film is, by any rough and living measure, too good to be true—an honorable D.A. consumed by an inner passion to find the light and save the land. If the real Jim Garrison had to be outrageously brave, staggeringly ambitious, willing like many a district attorney before him to cut a few corners, and vain enough to take on the moon, Costner is directed to play him as heir to Mr. Deeds and that particular Mr. Smith who once went to Washington. Wide-eyed, open, fearless, and consumed by his work, he is indefatigably fueled by his ideals. His only vulnerability (other than to the classic nagging of his wife, Sissy Spacek, who finds the children and herself ignored as a result of the exigencies of inquiry) is that he is innocent of guile and so has no built-in bulwark against the tide of horror he feels as he encounters the all-pervasive manipulations that are stifling his attempts to uncover the true conspirators responsible for the death of J.F.K.

In this mythic Wagnerian vein, the movie goes back to the primitive roots of silent film when each character was an attitude or a force or a spirit or a project—I will clear the forest, I will find the magic sword. Garrison/Costner takes off after evil, and is unhorsed over and over again by a variety of foul obstacles (the C.I.A.) and treacheries (a trusted associate). Always he gets up, always he goes on. At the end, defeated in his attempt to convict the immediate target, Clay Shaw, of conspiracy to murder the president, Garrison/Costner is nonetheless redeemed because he is in the right. He will prevail, or if he does not, the good fight will prevail, and if not in this venture, then in another. Many a silent film was built on the vision that virtue is equal to light and will take us through the dark—it was what the pianist was always telling us from the pit.

There should be no surprise, therefore, if the narrative jerks and manhandles us around many an unnegotiable turn. The film has a large conspiracy thesis that cannot be encompassed by the likes of Clay Shaw and David Ferrie and the supposed link between them as homosexuals. That does not provide us enough drama to assure us, as Lardner warned, that the Pentagon masterminded the assassination in response to J.F.K.'s desire to take us out of Vietnam. Nor does it prepare us for Garrison/Costner's final measure of the conspiracy, which includes elements from the C.I.A. and the Mafia, the F.B.I., the Secret Service, the Dallas police, and, yes, J. Edgar Hoover and Lyndon Johnson, accomplices after the fact who directed the cover-up. It is a paranoid installation the size of a space city on the moon, yet we come face-to-face with it in just two scenes, each didactic, each expository, and neither emerges from the action.

In the first, Garrison/Costner, all but defeated by the three-quarter point of the film, weary, spiritually burdened, and in need of recharging his missionary batteries, decides to visit Washington, D.C., and look around, ask around. He pays a visit to the Lincoln Memorial, and as he emerges onto the portico, a mysterious figure in a dark raincoat and a small gray checked fedora of precisely the sort that we expect an intelligence officer to wear comes into the frame and introduces himself. It is Donald Sutherland. In the next few minutes Sutherland explains it all—who killed Kennedy and how, and what steps Garrison/Costner can take. It was the military—Sutherland now offers—who did it, and with a wise smile he informs us of how he knows of what he speaks: as a member of an ultra-covert military outfit, he has long been geared for elite, high-tech snuff jobs. As they stand side by side in a drizzle, Sutherland fills Garrison/Costner in on how the Pentagon set up the assassination. "Testify," says our hero. "No chance," says the informant, and in another moment he is gone. It is all but the return of Deep Throat.

It could have been one of the more embarrassing moments in recent film history. Given our contemporary film canons, the use of such a scene is analogous to approaching the bed of one's beloved with a dildo larger than oneself. Yet Sutherland shows us what a talented actor using quiet means can accomplish in a scene that might be intolerable if anyone else tried to bring off this expository implant.

A little later, in the penultimate scene, at the conclusion of the Clay Shaw trial, Garrison/Costner comes up with a speech to the jury that is beyond the reasonable limits of any court; in that speech the cause of Kennedy's death is restated. He desired to get out of Vietnam, says Garrison/Costner, and Lyndon Johnson wanted to keep us there. So we have had a changing of the guard. Before it was over, every dark force in America had made its contribution. A case that has not been proved at all in the scene-to-scene details of the film now again delivers a final and arbitrary conclusion. We have been treated to not one deus ex machina of exposition but two, and at the very end, case lost (and indeed we, the audience, have been given no more real connection between Clay Shaw and the assassination conspiracy than was the actual jury), Garrison/Costner, reunited with his wife by the force of his pleading in court, walks out hand in hand with

her and with their children, and we see the family in a corny long shot at the other end of the courthouse lobby.

How, then, is *JFK* a great movie?

Let us commence with what is needed for a great history (as opposed to a great movie). Such a work not only would require a comprehension of the forces and tides that shape and convey an era, but would also be obliged to possess a special species of pointillism; its thousand diverse points of light ought to be details chosen well enough to buoy the history with resonance. That, however, cannot be asked of any movie. Films, we are bound to repeat, live between memory and the dream. A great film may be epic, operatic, panoramic, stoic, and certainly it can be mythic and embody the more powerful legends of our lives, but any attempt at cinematic history has to be an oxymoron. Oliver Stone, like many a movie man before him, has mislabeled the product. He has not made a cinematic history, and, indeed, to hell with that! He has dared something more dangerous: he has entered the echoing halls of the largest paranoid myth of our time—the undeclared national belief that John Fitzgerald Kennedy was killed by the concentrated forces of malign power in the land. It is not only our unspoken myth, but our national obsession: we have no answers to his death. Indeed, we are marooned in one of two equally intolerable spiritual states, apathy or paranoia.

That is a large remark, but it may fit the condition of our time. Since the death of J.F.K., we have suffered the moral disruption of Vietnam, the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy, the flatulent host of petty mysteries concerning Watergate—why ever did it happen, and what, in fact, took place? Like a battered wife, we have borne our national obsession through Carter and stagflation to be revived for a time by the Pied Piper; he, in turn, wrecked our economy in the course of cheering us up and defeating the Evil Empire. Of course, that Evil Empire was already on the way to expiring in its own dust, but we were ready to accept much hypocrisy (and future bankruptcy) to avoid living with dread.

For what is obsession but a black hole in our psychic space, a zone of ambiguity into which our energies flow and do not return? A nearer example to many of us: when a marriage ends in uncertainty and neither mate knows within who is more at fault for the divorce, then an obsession has commenced. One goes back again and again to the question: Was one more right than wrong, or more wrong than right? Fear stirs, precisely the fear of spiritual consequence. It is then that the ego—its hand on the throttle that will keep us moving forward—discharges funds of assurance. One must keep up the certainty that one is right even when one does not know, and somewhere, off to the side, one wonders if one's will is being corroded.

If that is the cost of personal obsession, what is one to make of the million-headed, or is it, rather, the hundred-million-headed, deficit of the national obsession? There have been moments in our history when all Americans have found themselves together for an hour in the same stricken space. Pearl Harbor was such a day, and the death of Franklin Roosevelt may have been another. The hour in which we learned of the bomb on Hiroshima had to be another. On that day, the new concept of atomic energy spoke with equal force to the idea of a new civilization and to the terror that all civilization would be destroyed. If that is, by now, an inter-

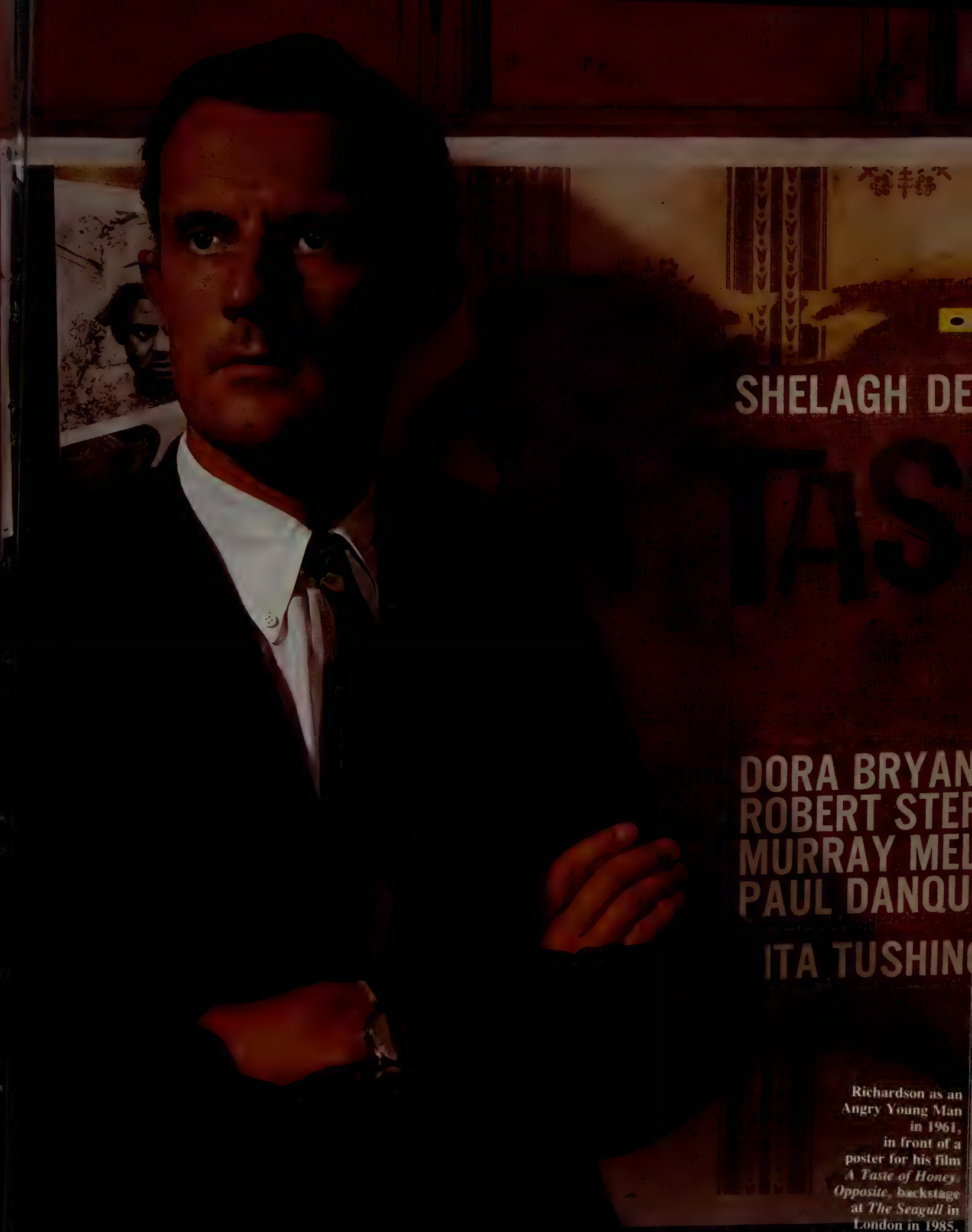
> Oliver Stone has mislabeled the product. He has not made a cinematic history, and, indeed, to hell with that!

national obsession so large that the fears are cosmic, the assassination of J.F.K. remains as the largest single event in the history of nearly all Americans who were alive that day. No afternoon in the recollection of our lives is equal to November 22, 1963, and in its aftermath we lost our innocence and had to decide whether life was absurd (for one demented assassin could swing the ship of state wholly off its course) or, worse, whether the route of the ship of state had been so determined that even a president, wishing to change the given, was hurled off the bridge. We have lived with that question ever since. Do we descend into paranoia, or suffer the tedium of an apathy that tells us we will never know and so may as well accept the theory of Oswald as the sole killer? There is a profound reason why the Washington Club clings to the lone assassin and the incredible bullet that passed at many an angle through both Jack Kennedy's body and John Connally's body—apathy is easier to endure than livid inquiry; a dubious set of unsatisfactory facts disrupts much less than does an all-out, full-scale investigation. Just as a good lawyer never asks a question to which he does not have the answer, at least not if he can help it, so the Washington Club does not pursue the assassination. For no one knows, unless there is someone who does know, where it may all end.

JFK is false probably to the likelihoods of whatever conspiracy did take place, since it is all but inconceivable that a major plot involving the Pentagon, the C.I.A., the F.B.I., and the White House could ever hold together through the decades. Yet, the horror persists: if the assassination were not an absurdity committed by one man in a surrealistic universe, nor even a foul deed brought *(Continued on page 171)*

EXIT PROSPERO

Director Tony Richardson was the wizard who transformed the English stage (*Look Back in Anger*) and screen (*Tom Jones*) and presided over a theatrical clan that included his ex-wife, Vanessa Redgrave, with whom he was planning a return to the West End. And as KATHLEEN TYNAN reports, Richardson faced his death from AIDS last November with the same style and wit that graced his finest work



Richardson as an Angry Young Man in 1961, in front of a poster for his film *A Taste of Honey*. *Opposite*, backstage at *The Seagull* in London in 1985, with Vanessa Redgrave and their daughter Natasha, who starred together.

With the death last November of Tony Richardson at sixty-three, Los Angeles lost its most zealous partisan, the world of theater and film lost a very great and oddly unsung British director, and his extended family lost its own peculiar, profoundly humane *animateur*.

Hawk-nosed, as thin as a heron, with a voice like a run-down foghorn, Richardson was a man who once sighted and heard was not easily forgotten, who once known became an indelible and indispensable part of your life, generous beyond good sense, though likely, should you commit some act he perceived as treacherous, to cast you off his island like a cranky, whimful Prospero, until you begged to be returned.

To return to Los Angeles meant to return to Tony, with the promise of entertainment and argument. When I arrived there a year ago, on New Year's Eve, I immediately called him. What was I doing that very night, he wanted to know. Would my daughter, her boyfriend, and I join him at the restaurant Spago? It would be a silly event, on a silly night. But it might be fun.

The Richardson magic: Albert Finney and Diane Cilento in *Tom*

I had not seen him for some time, and was shocked to see that he was sallow-complexioned and thinner even than usual. Of his AIDS-related illness, Tony spoke in the most peremptory way that night, as if he were detailing some mild and irritating impediment to his daily life. We ate well, we drank, and the clock struck midnight. To our table came the amiable wife of the patron, video camera in hand, to find out from each of us what we wished for the new year. My daughter drank to peace. I, sheepishly, to a romance. Then Tony lifted his glass and said, "To death!" It was a salute, buoyantly delivered, not meant, I would guess, particularly for our ears. Did the Grim Reaper smile and bow? For sure he refused an embrace, and Tony stayed around for almost another year, living his life on his own terms, orchestrating a dozen projects, of which the last was a planned production in London of *The Cherry Orchard*, in which he would direct his ex-wife, Vanessa Redgrave.

Richardson with his three daughters, Katharine Grimond, Natasha Richardson, and Joely Richardson, at Natasha's wedding to Robert Fox in 1990.

The only drawback, he complained, was the necessity of leaving Los Angeles for his loathed homeland, a damp, dull place full of "sad," "dreadful" people. A place he had forsaken in the early 1970s, when he turned his back on one of the most dazzling and radically influential theater and film careers of postwar Britain to live in a decomposed granite pit and tilt his lance at Hollywood windmills.

In the mid-1950s he had joined forces with George Devine to create the English Stage Company, discovered John Osborne, mounted *Look Back in Anger*, and pulled the English theater reeling into the mid–twentieth century. Unsnobbish, contemporary, energetic, and brilliant, Richardson brought Lindsay Anderson and William Gaskill into the theater; discovered such actors as Alan Bates, Joan Plowright, Tom Courtenay, Rita Tushingham, and Albert Finney; and revived the career of Laurence Olivier. He launched a film company which developed the work of new writers such as Alan Sillitoe and Shelagh Delaney, with working-class subjects and backgrounds; directed such films as *A Taste of Honey* and *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner;* promoted the careers of other directors, like Karel Reisz; and made a fortune with his Academy Award–winning film, *Tom Jones*.

He went on to make an arguably great movie, *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, and bad movies too, in a roller-coaster career which for some years left him without a hit, in a sort of obscurity —at least in the eyes of Hollywood. Re-

Jones, Claire Bloom and Richard Burton in *Look Back in Anger*, Laurence Olivier in *The Entertainer*, Jessica Lange and Tommy Lee Jones in *Blue Sky*.

"Vanessa explained to someone that I was her ex-husband, and I said, 'I'm your *only* husband,' and she burst into tears, and then we danced!"

cently Pauline Kael described Richardson as "one of the most gifted directors, and one who hasn't had the breaks he deserved." His movies, as another critic pointed out, were "made on his own terms, reflecting nobody's taste but his own."

Richardson's friends try to explain that he lived out his own fantasy with precious little accommodation, that he was a person of extreme and forcefully expressed opinion (equivalent, in the land of the free, to bad manners). "Too original to be nice," according to the novelist John Irving, "not concerned with good taste, nor careful whom he offended."

He was a man of sharp mind, capable of brilliant flashes of insight, yet capable of boyish dogmatism. Terribly brave, morally and physically. (He was also, incidentally, badly coordinated, and a tennis lesson a day for a couple of decades did not turn him into a major player.) A man who rarely discussed show biz, and read more comprehensively than most scholars. Above all, a man for whom the present tense was more seductive than the past, and boredom, anathema.

His last film, *Blue Sky*, not yet released, was made under Orion's banner. It is a very fine piece of work, the love story of a professional soldier (played by Tommy Lee Jones) and his beautiful, sexy, and unbalanced wife (Jessica Lange), explored against a background of an atomic-test cover-up in 1960 and within the closed society of military life on the move from Texas to Alabama. Both actors are full of praise for Richardson. "Tony staged things," Lange explained, "so that they're cracking with energy." Tommy Lee Jones described him as an artist full of surprises, a director who included the actor in the process of filmmaking and who shaped the film as he worked. "It didn't take us long," he added, "to become an itinerant band of players."

With that, Tommy Lee Jones hit the nail on the head concerning Richardson's skill: selecting, corralling, galvanizing, choreographing, and celebrating a diverse group of people on- and offscreen. The cinematographer Walter Lassally, describing the making of *Tom Jones* in his memoirs, confirms this: "End-of-picture parties are quite common, but on this film we had a start-of-picture party as well, attended by all the crew and cast, which Tony rounded off by saying, 'Now let's go and have a lovely ten weeks' holiday in the West Country.' "

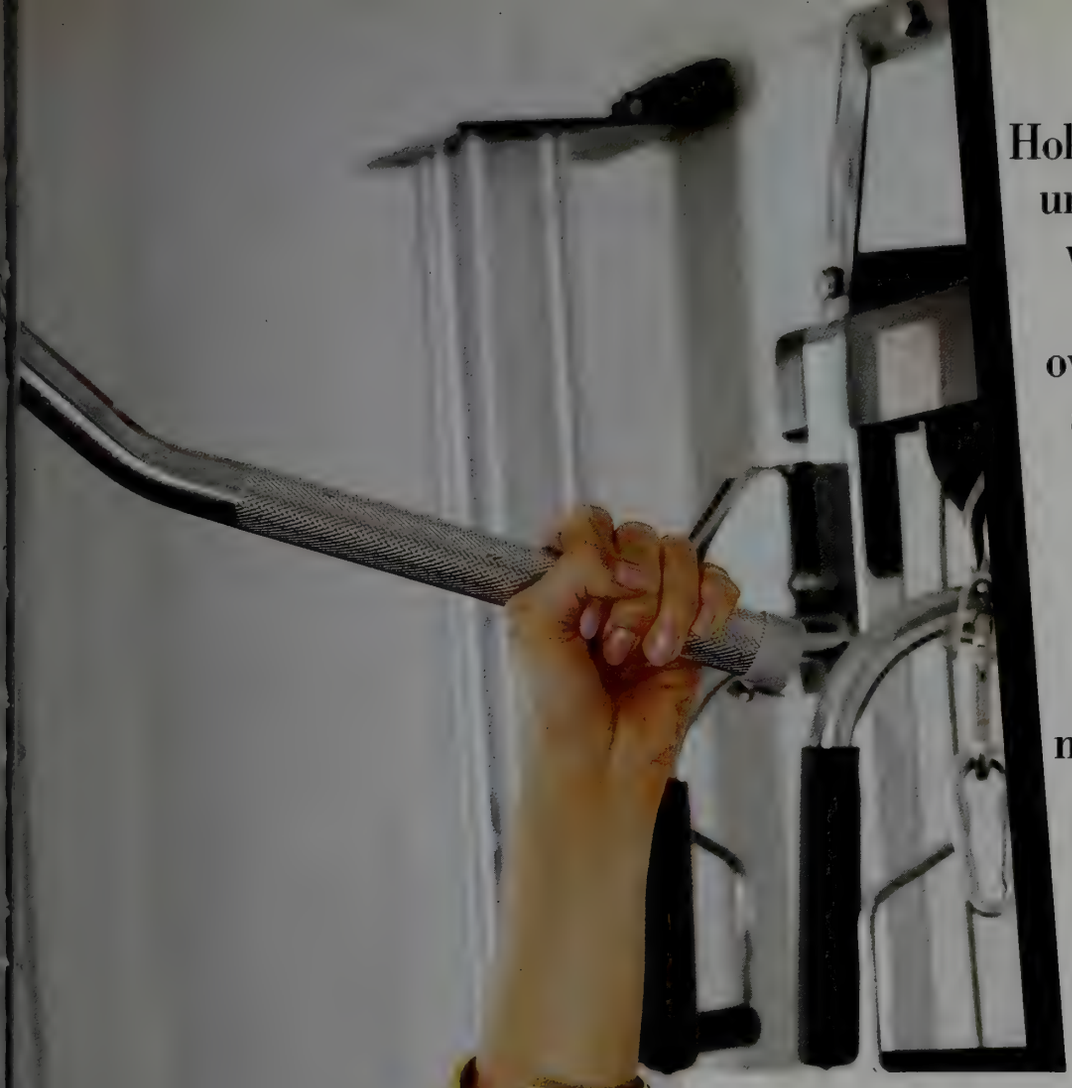
In December 1990 in New York, Tony produced another party: the marriage of his daughter, the actress Natasha Richardson, to the producer Robert Fox. After a civil ceremony performed in the apartment of Joan Didion and John Gregory Dunne, some ninety guests gathered at an Italian restaurant on Lexington Avenue. From London came Tony Richardson's other actress daughter by Vanessa Redgrave, twenty-six-year-old Joely (since engaged to the producer Tim Bevan), and Vanessa's mother, the actress Rachel Kempson; his seventeen-year-old daughter, Katharine, and her mother, Grizelda Grimond; and his best friend, the inventor and engineer Jeremy Fry.

There was Vanessa Redgrave's one-time lover, *(Continued on page 146)*

STYLED BY DEBRA LIGUORI, DRESS AND BRACELET BY DONNA KARAN, EARRINGS BY DANA SCHREIBER

TING

Lynda Carter pumps up in the gym of her Maryland manse.



Lynda Carter thought Hollywood was a bitch of a town—until she moved to Washington, where the Beltway grapevine has been buzzing over her spectacular social rise and the fall of her husband, Clark Clifford protégé Robert Altman, who faces possible indictment in the B.C.C.I. mess. Her star quality may now be his most valuable asset, but can Wonder Woman polish up her man's P.R.? LLOYD GROVE reports

WONDER WOMAN VS. WASHINGTON

Photographs by FIROOZ ZAHEDI

For the first eight months of the budding scandal, Lynda Carter played at being the consummate Washington Wife.

It's a cameo role, requiring the woman in question not so much to stand by her man as to sit behind him, usually in some light-bathed Capitol Hill hearing room where various members of Congress hurl abuse at the embattled witness—i.e., her husband—while cameras roll and the press takes notes. According to the traditions of the political theater—which have been observed by every wife from Maureen Dean to Betsy North to, at least until the battle was over, Virginia Thomas—the woman is expected to look demure, dignified, and sympathetic (occasionally a smile or a tear is permitted), and under no circumstances to open her mouth.

But we're discussing "Wonder Woman," who, when she was doing her network television series in the 1970s, could stop a speeding bullet with the flick of one of her bracelets, and also wielded a terrific left hook. In other words, a bona fide feminist superhero, albeit an amply endowed feminist superhero who wore a skimpy spangled corselet.

So Carter, trying to revive her show-business career after a four-year hiatus, during which she settled in the suburbs and had two children, recently told her husband, Washington lawyer Robert Altman, that she was keeping quiet no longer.

"I said, 'Well, honey, the silence is broken,' " Carter says, recounting their conversation. "He says, 'Oh, no! What did you do?' And I said, 'Well, it's done. There's nothing you can do about it. So there.' "

Thus she's started fighting back, talking about the Bank of Credit and Commerce International, a.k.a. "the Bank of Crooks and Criminals"—which was shut down in most countries last July—and the byzantine business dealings that have drawn Altman and his law partner, the erstwhile wise man Clark Clifford, into one of the biggest Washington scandals in years. And not just *talking:* she's apt to send you away with an inch-thick legal brief and a stack of manila folders containing transcripts of congressional testimony.

"Washington is a great city," Carter says, presiding over her 20,000-square-foot Georgian house on six lusciously landscaped acres in Potomac, Maryland—complete with pool, tennis court, and decorative waterfall—which she and her husband may end up having to sell. "It's immensely intriguing and interesting, and the people are interesting. But I think it's a vicious city. I think they have a voracious appetite for blood. I think that if they see a weakness in anyone, that they go for the throat and they go in to kill."

At forty, she has not aged much since her Wonder Woman days, still fetching and hard-bodied in a sleek gray suit and a bright Nicole Miller tie. She's sitting, shoeless, on a leather sofa in her library, a vaulting two-story room paneled from floor to ceiling in hand-tooled mahogany and filled with a haphazard collection in which *The House of Saud, The Superlawyers,* and *Mein Kampf* are interspersed among paperback romance novels.

"But don't just take the man down," Carter adds, her voice trembling in indignation. "Take his wife, take his family, take his home, take his . . ."

She trails off, suddenly alone with her confusion and fury.

"But is L.A. any less vicious?" I ask her, invoking her previous residence.

"In L.A.," Carter says, "they may be secretly happy if you fail. 'Did you see the ratings on her show?' Or 'Did you this?' Or 'Did you that?' But they don't set out to destroy your life. Here they set out to destroy your life and demean your wife, you know. I'm surprised they haven't attacked my children."

In that morning's *Washington Post*—a newspaper Carter holds in about the same affection as Pat Nixon must have during Watergate—there's a story disclosing the imminent breakup of Clifford & Warnke, the small, elite law firm founded by the former secretary of defense and "counsel to the president," the title of Clifford's recently published memoirs. The firm's sudden death, scuttling four thriving decades of practicing law in Washington for Clifford, is another consequence of the spreading scandal and the accompanying drumbeat of negative publicity, which has included speculation about the number of bathrooms in the Altmans' mansion (there are fifteen), reports that their servants habitually wear white gloves (they don't), references to B.C.C.I. founder Agha Hasan Abedi's wedding present to Carter (a four-door Jaguar XJ6 sedan), descriptions of their "spectacular" Christmas parties (they *are* pretty spectacular), and gossip that their marriage is on the rocks (it isn't).

"What an asshole," Carter says of a *Washington Post* reporter who referred to her in print as a "starlet," a label she doesn't accept gracefully after more than twenty years in show business, which she entered as a singer in a Tempe, Arizona, nightclub at age seventeen. "Calling me a starlet, just as a dig, just a little knife in the back, instead of an actress." Carter, though, is quick to add, "I apologize for that remark"—meaning her lapse into vulgarity. "I shouldn't have said it. It just got my dander up." Yet she eagerly goes on to brand the offending scribe "despicable," "jealous," "meanspirited," and "a jerk."

Bitchy press, however, is the least of her worries.

In August, her husband of seven years and Clark Clifford abruptly resigned as president and chairman, respectively, of First American Bankshares, Washington's largest bank holding company, amid revelations that it was secretly and illegally controlled by B.C.C.I. through a consortium of oil-rich Arabs. B.C.C.I., until recently a prized client of Clifford & Warnke—the law firm helped assemble B.C.C.I.'s defense team to fight federal money-laundering charges, to which the London-headquartered bank ultimately pleaded guilty in January 1990—has been accused of all manner of nefarious activities, even of committing murder via a clandestine global intelligence operation known as "the black network."

As with previous Washington scandals, the question being asked of Clifford and Altman is: What did they know, and when did they know it? Government investigators claim that bank documents suggest the lawyers were aware of B.C.C.I.'s hidden interest, but the two say they were deceived by "the World's Sleaziest Bank," as *(Continued on page 150)*

HAIR AND MAKEUP BY ENZO LAERA FOR ALDO COPPOLA; DRESS BY BOB MACKIE; SHOES BY MAUD FRIZON; EARRINGS BY JESSICA ROSE, FROM ARTWEAR, N.Y.C.

"What an asshole," Carter says of a reporter who called her a "starlet."

CAPITAL GAINS

With her cleavage-revealing gowns and Hollywood status, Lynda was an immediate Washington sensation. Here, in her library, with daughter Jessica and son Jamie Clifford

GAY'S liberation

Eleven years after his infamous best-seller, *Thy Neighbor's Wife*, nearly destroyed his reputation, his friendships, and his marriage, Gay Talese has worked out his demons in *Unto the Sons*. A sweeping chronicle of the Italian-American soul, the book marks the first time Talese has turned his sharp eye to his own life. ARTHUR LUBOW reports

It is near midnight on a desolate strip of the New Jersey Pine Barrens, and Gay Talese has run out of gas. We are midway between his Manhattan town house and the dowdy seaside resort of Ocean City, New Jersey, where he grew up and where, when he was still a struggling writer, he paid $26,500 for a large red-shingled weekend house. His wife, Nan, is stretched out in the backseat of the Chrysler station wagon, with two yapping Australian terriers and a manuscript she is editing by flashlight. I am in the front seat with a reporter's notepad. We have arrived at a large Exxon station, according to plan, only to discover that all the pumps are being repaired. The Chrysler, which both speaks ("You are low on fuel") and calculates, has advised us that we can go only another seventeen miles. Rising from the driver's seat, Gay, in two pieces of a $2,000 hand-tailored three-piece suit, enters the convenience store to see if the night manager can supply a little gas. He emerges instead with some directions to the nearest gas station. It is thirteen miles away. We should be able to make it.

PROFESSIONAL VOYEUR

"If it isn't personal, it doesn't interest me."

But somehow, as we drive off into the unlit night, we find ourselves on a road with none of the traffic signals the manager promised, and after five miles, fearing a breakdown in the middle of nowhere, we turn back. As we near the Exxon station, Gay's temper begins to boil over. Screeching into the station, he drives onto the gas-tank construction site, which has been blocked off with orange plastic cones. Bristling, stiffly erect, he strides toward the convenience store. Out of the rear

Photograph by JONATHAN BECKER

seat floats Nan's fluty voice. "Gay, darling. Would you come talk to me for a minute, darling?" Without looking back, Gay, even and measured, says, "It's all right."

As her husband bounds up to the manager, Nan ruefully tells me that over the past few months she has adopted the routine of driving late to Ocean City, chatting with their elder daughter, Pamela, while Gay sleeps in the back. "I usually get gas early," she says. "I should have mentioned it." She is watching, a bit wary but totally composed, as Gay, tightly coiled with anger, stands face-to-face with the manager. "Goddamn it, you didn't do one goddamn thing to help us," he is saying. "You sent us down the wrong road. You put all our lives at risk. I'm going to call the police and see what they have to say." Not quite comprehending, the night manager is sputtering, "I told you which road. You wrote it down yourself. You wrote it wrong."

"I'm sure he's right," Nan says with quiet good humor. "Gay is hopeless with directions. I should have gotten out of the car." She is fumbling for an auto-towing-insurance card. She walks briskly to a pay telephone to start making calls.

However, in the end it is Gay who flags down a passing van and cajoles Norman, the young driver, into taking him to the closest station for a can of gas. During the forty-minute trip, Gay learns the young man's story, which he tells us later that night. Norman is twenty-seven and drives a forklift. In high school he was a star shortstop, so good that he won tryouts with the Toronto Blue Jays and the Chicago White Sox. "At the Blue Jays camp he just couldn't hit, he doesn't know why—he just couldn't seem to connect with the ball," Gay recounts, sadly shaking his head. "Then with the White Sox every ball took a bad bounce, and although he had made just two errors in the entire season, now in the training camp he couldn't hold on to the ball. But he's not bitter. He says, 'I guess it wasn't meant to be.' " Gay repeats it slowly, wonderingly. "I guess it wasn't meant to be."

But before Gay delivers this story of another man's life, which he has composed reflexively in the bittersweet vein of Irwin Shaw or John O'Hara, he bids Norman farewell by peeling a hundred-dollar bill off the roll in his pocket. Norman's eyes widen and he protests that it is far too much. "Not too much for what you did, Norman," says Talese with courtly formality. "You're a good man, Norman."

It is 1:30 in the morning. The crisis is over. In the lurid overhead light of the station, Gay's gray-white hair glitters. His thin, hollowed-out face gleams gray-white, too, and his dark eyes burn. He

The Elaine's crowd photographed by Irving Penn in 1971: *first row,* Arthur Kopit, Jack Gelber, George Plimpton, Gay Talese; *second row,* Willie Morris, Jack Richardson, Elaine Kaufman, Christopher Cerf, David Halberstam; *third row,* Nick Pileggi, Robert Brown, Jean-Pierre Rassam, Bernard Farber; *fourth row,* John Barry Ryan III, Lewis Lapham, Bobby Short, William Styron, Bruce Jay Friedman.

IRVING PENN

leans toward me conspiratorially. I can see that in his mind he is writing my story—which is, after all, his story. The left side of his mouth crooks up in a knowing grin. "Scene!" he shouts hoarsely. "Scene! Scene!"

Gay Talese is a master at creating scenes. He won fame in the early 1960s by showing that a magazine writer—if he put in the hours and had the ear—could create the scenes rich in incident and dialogue that enliven fiction. Along with Tom Wolfe, Jimmy Breslin, and other masters of what was dubbed "the New Journalism," he made writing for *Esquire* or *New York* seem the most thrillingly contemporary thing that a young man could do. A decade earlier it had been publishing stories in *The New Yorker* like Shaw or O'Hara. A decade later it would be shooting movies like Coppola or Scorsese. For much of the sixties, it was magazine writing, and Talese was at the head of the pack. "I think there's no doubt that he was the most important journalist of the sixties in terms of the impact he had on reporters in city rooms all over the country," says Pulitzer Prize–winning author David Halberstam. "Everyone read what he wrote, especially in *Esquire*, and wanted to write like him."

***Top,* Talese with his parents and sister on the Boardwalk in Atlantic City, circa 1939. *Above,* with Joe DiMaggio at Yankee Stadium, 1965. *Right,* in a Times Square sex shop, researching *Thy Neighbor's Wife*.**

"He doesn't live the lives of these people, but he lives in their lives," says Nick Pileggi. "He absorbs their world like a sponge."

Talese writes books now, and, except for the excerpts, he rarely appears in magazines. At least not as a writer. For as well as being an author of books, Talese is also—by virtue of his longevity, his success, and his talent for making real-life scenes—a celebrity. Many who can't name one of his books could identify him as a longtime regular at Elaine's, the uptown saloon that began as a hangout for ascending writers and rose with them to become (like the White Horse Tavern of the fifties) a place for tourists to gawk at the literary stars.

Talese is one of the recognizable personalities of New York, gliding through fashionable parties and restaurants in his conspicuously tailored suits. As icy as a prince in a Bronzino portrait, he is also a loyal and generous friend with a fondness for the grand gesture. At a publication party he gave at his East Sixty-first Street town house last November for Nancy Friday, who is the author of *Women on Top* and the wife of *Wall Street Journal* editor Norman Pearlstine, Talese moved unobtrusively through a crowd that included Tom Brokaw, Diane Von Furstenberg, Mort Zuckerman, and Robert Caro, blending shyness with pride in a manner that recalled Jay Gatsby (especially if you knew how many shirts were upstairs in his closet). Which is not to say that Talese is always so gracious. He can be cuttingly rude, disrupting dinners with the aplomb of a Park Avenue terrorist. "Out of boredom I just want to shock people—no, not shock them, but cause some conflict or scene," he says. "There are times I'm sending out trial balloons. I'm trying to change the atmosphere. I want it to be more personal, because if it isn't personal, it doesn't interest me."

As a writer, of course, Talese is usually alone, unseen by the outside world. This month he surfaces with *Unto the Sons*, an ambitious saga of the Italian-American experience as refracted through the Talese family. Like most Italian immigrants, the Taleses came from the impoverished South. *Unto the Sons* alternates between Maida, the remote Calabrian village where Gay's father was born, and Ocean City, the American town in which he settled. With centripetal force, Gay, an obsessive researcher, sucks in much more: everything from the Pennsylvania asbestos town where his grandfather (another immigrant from Maida) found employment to the subjugation of southern Italy by Napoleon's brother-in-law Joachim Murat, to the impact of the First and Second World Wars. *Unto the Sons*—the first of a projected trilogy for which Knopf has guaranteed Talese $7 million—is chockablock with information, most of which will be unfamiliar even to Italian-Americans.

For the first time, Talese has written a book that is not journalism. It is part memoir, part history, and part historical fiction. In it he even changes a few names (a cardinal sin in his earlier writings) and re-creates many scenes without the benefit of direct eyewitnesses. So *Unto the Sons* is a depar-

ture. Yet it is also in some sense a sequel, and one can understand how Talese came to write it only by recalling its predecessor. Although eleven years have elapsed since he last produced a book, the scent of *Thy Neighbor's Wife* still lingers, burning so acridly in Talese's nostrils that, for him, it might have come out yesterday. Shortly before publication, *Thy Neighbor's Wife* was sold to the movies for $2.5 million (a record until *Scarlett* recently ran off with $8 million), and the book went on to top the best-seller lists. It was, in short, a commercial triumph. It was also a personal and professional disaster, in which Talese the author was completely obscured by Talese the scene-maker. Beginning in 1973 with a piece by Aaron Latham in *New York,* Talese, who intended a serious study of obscenity and sexual liberation in America, was lampooned for his "research" (the word cried out for leering quotation marks) in massage parlors and sex clubs. He was a joke. And for those who, unbidden, took the side of his beautiful and apparently long-suffering wife, he was an ugly joke. "Everything went rotten for me after the movie sale," Talese says. "Yeah, it sold a lot of books, but it seemed like I became in the minds of many a disgusting person."

At the end of *Thy Neighbor's Wife,* Talese, who had been practically invisible in his previous writing, stepped onstage and joined a cast of characters embarked on extramarital sexual explorations. The book closes with him standing naked in a group of nudists near Ocean City, observed by a gaggle of binoculars-toting solid citizens just like the ones he had grown up with. All eyes were on the professional voyeur. He says that when he wrote about that moment, he determined what his next book must be: "It had taken me to a point where I could not turn back."

But with Talese no paths are straight. He is a master divagator. In his conversation, which is marked by punctilious and unidiomatic locutions, he will wander so far from the original point that he will catch himself minutes later and say, "What the hell am I talking about?" His life is as paradoxically precise and digressive as his speech. Although he rigorously structures his daily routine from his muffin in the morning to his one Bombay martini at 8:30 P.M., he works painfully, spasmodically, and not always productively. During the last decade, he started and abandoned another book before *Unto the Sons*. He had an agonizing and irrevocable falling-out with his best friend. He reached a complex accommodation with his wife. And finally, having always written about other people with whom he could identify, he prepared to mark his sixtieth birthday, which falls this month, as the author of a book that is nakedly about himself.

"I was olive-skinned in a freckle-faced town," Talese writes in *Unto the Sons*. Ocean City was a Methodist community, and its Catholic minority was Irish. The Taleses, and especially Gay's Italian-born father, Joseph, protruded as alien. Although Gay and his younger sister, Marian, thought of themselves as Americans, they weren't permitted to eat or dress like their classmates. Joseph Talese, who was a tailor, outfitted his son like a mannequin, in velvet-collared houndstooth jackets and little fedoras. "Having to dress well—that's pretty ridiculous when you're growing up, especially in a beach town," Gay says. Ridiculous, but also functional: dressing formally was a way of maintaining distance from people who might condescend. Talese grudgingly admits that some boys called him "dago" and "Wop." He still remembers the names of those boys. When he reported the humiliations to his father, Joseph Talese would sternly say, "These people are bums. They are going nowhere." The hand-tailored clothing that Gay has worn all his life is like a suit of armor he has inherited from his father. In the mirror-faced wall of closets in his retreat, the top floor of his Manhattan town house, he has twenty-six custom-made suits. There are another ten in the Ocean City house. He shudders at the idea of owning a pair of blue jeans.

Throughout his reporting career, Talese has been drawn to Italian-American subjects. Writing in *Esquire* about the hot-tempered, big-tipping, dapper Frank Sinatra or the painstakingly polite, fiercely proud, dapper Joe DiMaggio, Talese was in part writing about himself. Similarly, in *Honor Thy Father* he established a surprising rapport with the young mafioso Bill Bonanno because they had so much in common: like Bonanno, Talese felt himself only "a fractional American," unable to break from his immigrant father, and, also like Bonanno, he acted in his own household as "the dominant Sicilian male who did as he pleased, came and went as he wished."

Talese's talent as a reporter is to empathize with his subjects. His books are oblique tunnels of self-discovery. "He doesn't live the lives of these people, but he lives in their lives," says his first cousin the writer Nick Pileggi. "He absorbs their world like a sponge." He resembles an actor who, choosing a role in which he sees an aspect of himself, expands that aspect to fill his personality. He adopts the references and values of the people who are his subjects. He moves in so close that he loses all distance.

This was both his virtue and his failing at *The New York Times*. He joined the newspaper as a copyboy in 1953 and returned, after a two-year army stint, as a sportswriter. "I didn't cover games, but I wrote about people who were athletes in a way that, at least on *The New York Times,* they hadn't been written about before," he says. "I was more interested in where they came from, in what they thought in between games—what the people were, not what their batting averages were." When he was reassigned to the city desk in 1959, he continued to focus on individuals and to experiment with the low-key lyrical sentences and transcribed dialogue his favorite short-story writers employed.

In his spare time, of which there was plenty, Talese wrote magazine pieces, both for *The New York Times Magazine* and for *Esquire*. He resisted hard-news assignments, wanting a regular column he couldn't get. In 1965 he told Abe Rosenthal, who was then metropolitan editor at the *Times,* that he was quitting. "I wish I could give you a column, but it's not my candy store," Rosenthal told him sorrowfully. He asked what the young reporter was going to do.

"Write a book," Talese answered.

"What on?"

"*The New York Times*."

"Who the hell wants to read a book about *The New York Times*?"

Rosenthal didn't understand that Talese would look at the institution of the *Times* the way he looked at everything: as a web of individuals. *The Kingdom and the Power,* an instant classic, founded a school of personality-oriented media books that continues to flourish. And it transformed Talese from a magazine writer into an author.

His next book was *Honor Thy Father*. (The title *The Kingdom and the Power* was invented by an *Esquire* editor, and Talese, whose earnestness is easily confused with pomposity, has held on to the conceit.) What makes *Honor Thy Father* extraordinary is that for much of the time that Talese was researching it Joe Bonanno was in hiding and his son Bill was the target of Mob hit men. "There's a wallful of Mafia books, but they've been about informers or former gangsters," says Pileggi, the author of *Wiseguy*. "Gay got one about a guy who was still operational. It was written at the same time Bill Bonanno was dodging bullets. It's amazing." Bill Bonanno would come to dinner or even baby-sit for the two Talese daughters, posting a couple of armed bodyguards downstairs. Getting closer and closer to his subject, Talese defended the Mafia as a provider of essential services to a hypocritical society. "If you want someone murdered, they'll do it for you," Talese's friend author A. E. Hotchner recalls him saying. "If you can't get a loan, they provide one." Talese began to see the entire world through the eyes of an embattled gangster. "If you were talking about fireflies in Iceland," says Nan, "he would bring in the Mafia."

Talese with Nan, his wife of thirty-two years, at the New York opening of *City Slickers*.

As Talese considered what book to begin next, he lighted on a topic with even more personal significance than the filial relationship of an Italian-American to his immigrant father. He chose a subject that connected directly to the sin-burdened Ocean City altar boy who didn't even masturbate until he left home for college, to the dutiful son who sensed that "there was this erotic life going on in parked cars and behind sofas that I was not partaking in." He would write, he decided, about the sexual frustrations of white heterosexual American men who were entering mid-life in a declared Age of Sexual Liberation.

He told his wife that if she felt the book would endanger their marriage he would not undertake it. She told him he was being silly.

> He acted in his own household as "the dominant Sicilian male who did as he pleased, came and went as he wished."

Talese had never wanted to get married. In 1957, when he was a *Times* sportswriter, he was introduced to Nan Ahearn, a recent graduate of Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart. Like many well-bred girls in the fifties, she was working at respectable jobs until she found a husband. In Gay she saw a handsome young man with a passion for books and a single-minded ambition to be a writer. He had little in common with the boys who had escorted her to Princeton games and to the Stork Club and to the Westchester Cotillion, at which she had made her debut. Those boys would be lawyers and bankers like her father, a handsome man who wore three-piece suits and consoled himself with alcohol. Her father paid attention only when she talked to him of philosophy or literature. She had majored in those subjects at Manhattanville.

For Gay, this dark-haired young woman with enormous green eyes might have been Judy Jones in F. Scott Fitzgerald's "Winter Dreams," a short story he loved so much that he had typed it out to see how it was constructed. Fitzgerald's protagonist was, like Gay, a tradesman's son in a summer resort, for whom the cultured, classy, glamorous Judy Jones was the incarnation of every youthful dream. So for Gay was Nan Ahearn. After an initial lunch date at Toots Shor, during which Nan concluded he was more full of himself than anyone she had ever met, they hit it off. They had been dating for about a year when Nan, unable to get a commitment from Gay on whether he would be working over the Fourth of July weekend, went off with another boy and some friends to Maine. When she returned, she called Gay at the *Times*. His voice was icy. Leaving work, she went over immediately to see him. "I'm terribly sorry," he told her, "but I can't spend my time worrying about competing with other young men. I have my work to do here. If you want to see me, you're going to have to be there for me."

Nan decided it was worth it. However, as she proceeded to refuse dates with the eligible young men of Rye, her parents wondered when she would announce her engagement. She had a portrait taken at Bachrach, which won her another six months. But two years went by, and Gay had not indicated any readiness to marry.

In May 1959, *The New York Times Magazine* dispatched Talese to Rome to write *(Continued on page 154)*

ADAM SCULL

THE CHAMPAGNE TRAIL

Rounding up the best of the bubblies

BY JOEL L. FLEISHMAN

While everyone else was wassailing wildly, ripping off ribbons, and generally making merry through the holidays, this column was hard at work, conducting a blind tasting of fifty-eight different champagnes. But our New Year's resolution is to accept our difficult lot quietly, so, without complaint, here are the results of our tongue-to-the-grindstone labors.

The big surprise: For the first time in a tasting for this column, Roederer Cristal topped Dom Pérignon ($80). Frequently, Cristal seems a bit too citrusy for my liking, but the 1985 ($120) wrested the crown away with an exquisitely delicate nose followed by crisp lime and toasty mouth flavors in perfect balance. It was not only the champion superpremium in the tasting, but also the consensus best of all fifty-eight. Nipping at Cristal's heels was Veuve Clicquot's 1985 La Grande Dame ($85), which is lustier but equally well balanced. The toastiness keeps the yeastiness in check, and the dry, spicy citrus gently softens the delicate sweet edge of the fruit. In the same league is the 1982 Salon ($125), a stunning wine with a mousse of such puckish effervescence that it continues bubbling in your mouth after a full minute of being warmed there.

The tasting also revealed some impressive new contenders. Scharffenberger Cellars, established in 1981 in the Anderson Valley of Mendocino County, is now hitting its stride. Its winemaker, John Scharffenberger, credits the newfound excellence in part to his recent affiliation with France's venerable Pommery champagne. Both Scharffenberger entries—the nonvintage Brut ($16.50) and the 1986 Blanc de Blancs ($20)—scored close to the top of their flights. Even more surprising—if only because of its geography—was the superb showing of the wines from Gruet, a French champagne house which in 1981 bought what are described as seventeenth-century vineyards in, of all places, New Mexico, replanted them, and recently marketed its first releases. Its nonvintage Blanc de Noirs ($15)—very dry, spicy, and crisp—showed extremely well against California's best bubblies.

Other French affiliates in California also impressed us. Chandon's Brut ($14), which has not sparkled in our tastings for several years, is back on track and significantly better even than its heretofore favored Blanc de Noirs ($12) and Reserve ($21), both of which limped in at the bottom of their respective flights. The Brut rings full and crisp, with a round, lemony, peppery mousse and a long, spicy finish. The Roederer Estate Anderson Valley Brut ($16) presents very dry, yeasty mouth flavors, and Taittinger's Domaine Carneros ($17) has the same yeasty character, but is more pungent and boasts a fuller mousse.

This tasting also underscored how competitive, by world-class standards, the California sparklers have become. In a flight with eight California wines and three well-known champagnes from France, the Louis Roederer Brut Premier ($25) finished first, but the 1987 Schramsberg Blanc de Blancs ($22) came in second, ahead of two French entries. In another flight of six French and five California wines, the 1986 Iron Horse Blanc de Blancs ($22) showed second, and the 1987 Mumm Cuvée Napa Winery Lake ($22) zoomed to third, ahead of Laurent Perrier Brut ($30), Bollinger Special Cuvée ($27), Veuve Clicquot ($28), Charles Heidsieck Brut Reserve ($32)—and even Mumm's own Cordon Rouge ($35). The Schramsberg offers a whirlwind of a mousse, tasting of lemon and yeast, while the Roederer is a bit sweeter and more pungent. The Iron Horse is fresh, spicy, lemony, and frothy, with a long, mouth-coating finish, all in fabulous balance. The Mumm Winery Lake is toasty and lemony, very crisp and bright. The Laurent Perrier is also fresh, citrusy, and carefully proportioned.

Among the other standouts of the tasting was Taittinger's 1983 Comtes de Champagne ($85), a jewel of sheer perfection, with a soft nose of toast and a lingering, spicy finish. The Krug Grande Cuvée ($85) is somewhat tangier and more peppery, as well as more powerful, even if not as precisely balanced, but what a grand, mouth-puckering finish it has. Jacquart's 1982 La Cuvée Renommée ($35) offers flavors of nearly comparable distinction and finesse, with a much friendlier price. It is jovial and creamy in the mouth, with a surprising dry, burnt edge that is almost carnal.

Moët & Chandon's 1986 Brut Impériale ($35) is a wonder, with a complex mousse of toast and pepper, very fresh and merry, which goes on and on. Veuve Clicquot's 1983 Gold Label Brut ($45) is more pungent, but refreshes with crisp, toasty, dry lime flavors. The 1985 Taittinger Brut ($35) is softer and less focused than the Moët, but its tasty toastiness is set off by flavors of yeast. Perrier-Jouët's 1985 Brut ($38) is full-bodied and lemony, with a bracing mousse. Bollinger's 1985 Grande Année Brut ($45) has slightly greater pungency, which is well married with savory flavors of dry toast. □

TIM SHEAFFER

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Exit Prospero

(Continued from page 133) the Italian actor Franco Nero, with their son, Carlo. There was Vanessa herself, flown in that morning on the Concorde from London. There was the actor Rupert Everett. There were the loyal friends from Los Angeles, and from New York a contingent of theater and film people—John Guare, Peter Shaffer, Martin Sherman, Lauren Bacall, Paul Shrader, Buck Henry.

Natasha had recently starred in a number of films—no doubt mindful of her father's instructions to her as he bounced her on his knee, aged three: "Movies, movies, movies." And Richardson, at that moment, was directing the party. He told the best man, the writer John Heilpern, that he was not to toast the bride and groom, but to introduce Vanessa, who would read a poem written by her sister, Lynn Redgrave, and would in turn be followed by Rupert and Grizelda. And so the performance proceeded, until it was Tony's turn to get up. Several of his friends were apprehensive. Had he not for weeks been making an incredible fuss over this speech business, his terror of taking the stage compounded by his exceptional distaste for marriage per se? ("Why spoil a perfectly good four-year relationship with a vow that changes everything?") But the show must go on, and the night before, he had told his beloved Natasha, when she asked how *she* should behave, "For God's sake, don't cry. It's not a day for parading your emotions."

Greeted by a huge ovation, he got up, wearing the first suit anyone had ever seen him in, for he normally wore jeans and sneakers, and began: "I do not come from the performing part of this theatrical clan." He then proceeded to pay tribute to Robert's late father, Robin Fox, the English agent and producer (father also of Edward and James), and he ended by toasting "these two people, who are careening down the rapids of this ridiculous institution called marriage."

The speech was "so graceful, so meaningful, and so exactly right," Joan Didion reported, "that it just took your breath away."

Afterward, an accordionist played, and Vanessa—not one to remain in the wings—tied a napkin around her head and sang bits of "The Sound of Music," as well as the dread "Edelweiss" song and "Get Me to the Church on Time," helped along by Rupert Everett. Then she danced between the tables, and the whole room, under Tony's direction, drank and made a lot of noise.

The party over, the host flew back to Los Angeles, to his red wooden house in the Hollywood Hills, from where he could see the sun rise over downtown L.A. and watch it move over the Palos Verdes Peninsula and across the ocean and set behind the Santa Monica Mountains, a house of light, surrounded by a large junglelike garden planted with citrus, crêpe-myrtle, palm, pepper, and jacaranda trees, a property with two swimming pools, a tennis court, and an aviary.

For a man who liked to celebrate the extended family on- and offscreen, and loathed the solitary life, Richardson chose to live alone. Romantic and rash, he seemed always to be seeking new conquests and risking disappointment. I remember watching him at the Cannes Film Festival, some twenty years ago, chase a girl who happened to be in love and newly attached to another man. Unfazed, Tony asked her to go waterskiing, the only tactic he could find to remove her from the other man—a famously unsporting type. The problem was that Tony had never been on skis. Impressed by this foolhardy courage, and touched by his ungainly efforts to get up out of the water, the woman almost abandoned the love of her life in his favor.

He liked to conquer, and he liked to move on. Or so it seemed to me till he told me about another fiesta, an alfresco lunch he had hosted some time ago at the Hollywood house. It was in honor of the twenty-first birthday of Carlo Nero, who wants to be a director. The guests had gathered—sons and daughters, lovers and their lovers, polymorphous and mildly perverse, and, of course, the mother of the guest of honor, Vanessa Redgrave. There was a barbecue by the pool, and long tables on the grass alongside the aviary. Natasha cooked. Champagne was served, and afterward the guests joined hands and danced around the tables to the music of an accordion.

"It was really magical," Tony told me in his emphatic drawl. "I mean, it was one of those things that worked. Then Tasha decided it was Vanessa's and my silver wedding anniversary, and Joely proposed a toast to 'the only marriage in the family.' Vanessa explained to someone she introduced that I was her ex-husband, and I said, 'I'm your *only* husband' [laughter], and she burst into tears and *sobbed* [high-pitched laughter], and then we danced!"

I said that I thought that was wonderful, and I began to cry. Tony looked at me and continued to laugh his sardonic provocateur's laugh and asked, "What's wonderful?" And I said, "It's just very moving." "What's moving?" And he went on laughing while the tears poured down his face.

Tony Richardson met Vanessa Redgrave when she was a teenager, the daughter of famous actor parents, Michael Redgrave and Rachel Kempson. Richardson was already famous. A few years later, in April 1959, he directed a production of *Othello* at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in which Miss Redgrave walked on as a Cypriot. A year or two after that, he noted that the schoolgirl had grown up, and fell in love with her. She was equally enamored, and they lived together for several years before getting married, in April 1962. Vanessa was twenty-four; Tony was thirty-three—described in the press as "a one-man New Wave who put the kitchen sink on the map." Even after their divorce, they remained loving friends. While never much sympathizing with her politics, Tony always admired the intelligence of her work, her instinctive understanding of character, and what he described as her "absolute emotional truth, which just streams off whatever she does."

He used to advise her even when not directing her himself. In 1989, during the out-of-town run of Peter Hall's production of *Orpheus Descending*, Redgrave complained that she was unhappy with her performance. Tony told her to change from a southern accent and play Italian. Had not Tennessee Williams written the part for Anna Magnani? Vanessa changed her performance overnight and became a huge hit. His daughters would listen likewise. In 1984 he went to see Natasha in her first big London part, as Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. After the performance he went backstage and instructed her to drive him to the airport early the next morning. "That's a bit rich, I thought," Natasha recalled, "having to get up early after my opening. In the car he told me, 'It's not enough to have a lovely voice.' He said I hadn't begun to think about the part. I was devastated. How could he be so cruel? A couple of days later he sent me a copy of the play underlined and noted. I no longer thought he was cruel, and my performance radically changed for the better."

Richardson always liked to be in control—of his family, of his cast and crew. "After all," he used to say, "I am a director. I can't do anything else. That's what I wanted to do since I was a boy."

Cecil Antonio Richardson was born on June 5, 1928, in Shipley, a suburb of Bradford, Yorkshire, the only child of lower-middle-class parents. His father, whom he saw little of, was a pharmacist. His mother was a reserved woman who tried to draw her outgoing, civic-minded husband away from his public life. "I loved her, but she was totally enclosed and hard-worked, looking after the household. Both my grandmothers lived with us, one with arthritis, a frozen old reptile, and the other nice. In addition, there was a maiden aunt or two. So I lived in the world of these old women, a life of total, absolute protection."

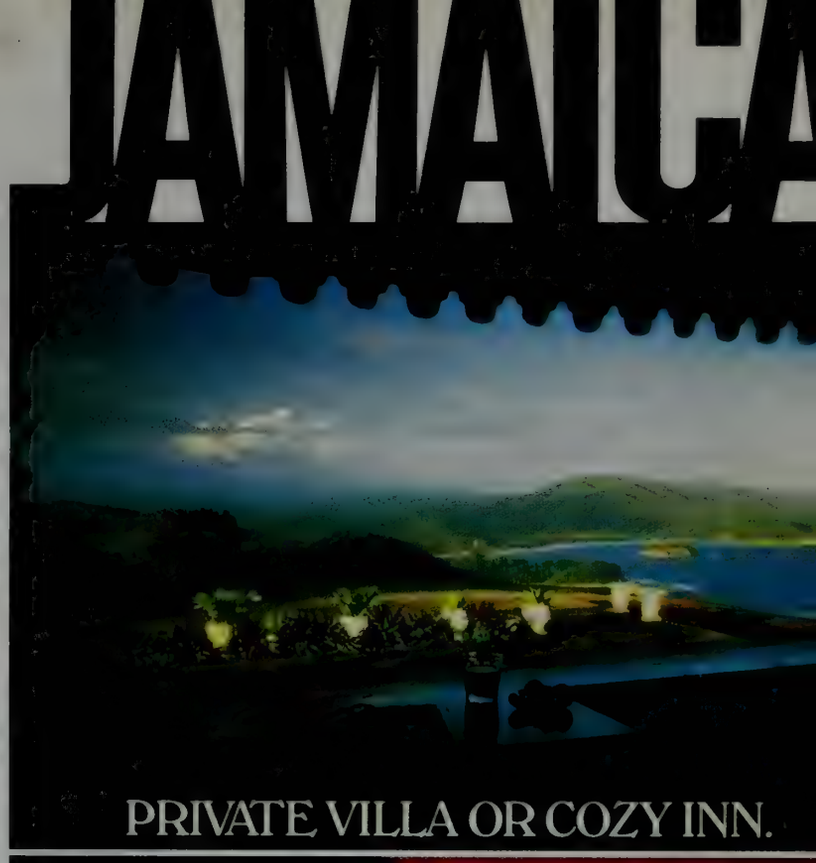
From a private day school, Tony was sent to a private boarding school, Ashville College, in Harrogate. There, at twelve, he directed his first play, *Everyman,* and there he suffered. "Ashville was horrors beyond horrors. Brutality, beatings, and bullying. It was just disgusting. The winter of 1939 was terribly cold, and there was no heating of any kind—just one prison blanket on the beds. We were ten-year-olds, and we used to get into each other's beds just simply for warmth. And one night the lights were flung on and this terrible headmaster raged in and dragged everyone out of bed and beat us savagely. We were told it was for 'rubbing up.' I hadn't the vaguest idea what that meant. I was keeping warm! The place was monstrous, and there was no education. I just read, and lived in my own world. But I learned that nobody can make you do anything you don't want to. I never played sports. I realized that I could just say no, and they could do two things, throw me out—which they weren't about to, because they needed the fee—or beat me to death, and they didn't dare quite do that! So they couldn't break me."

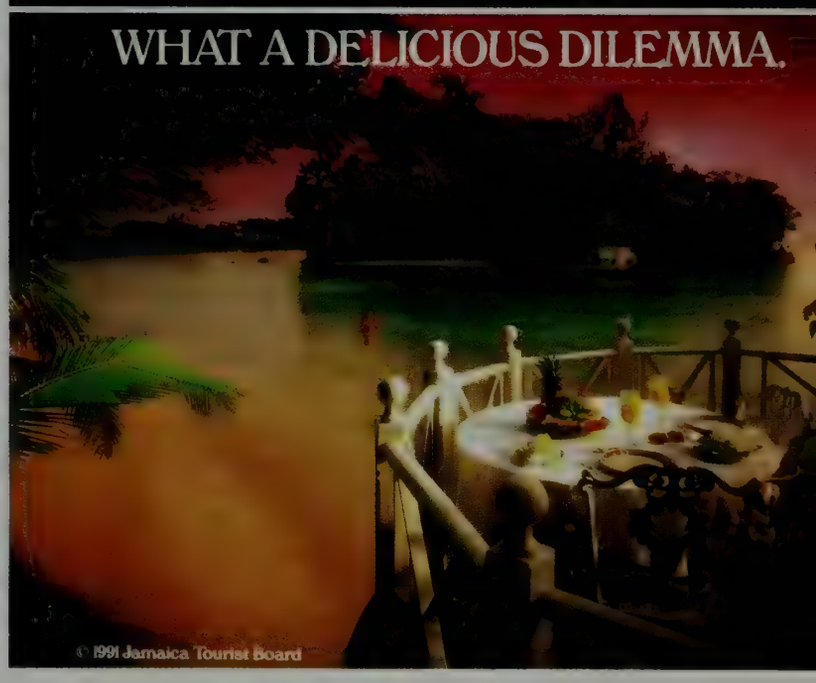
He went to the movies whenever he could. "I wasn't going to be a diplomat, or a lawyer, or a politician, as my parents hoped. I was going to be a film director, and the way to start was in the theater."

When the distinguished theater director William Gaskill was a Bradford schoolboy, he joined Richardson's amateur group, the Shipley Young Theatre, and noted Tony's "elongated figure and squeaky drawl," as well as his ambition. "He was iconoclastic about anything that was sentimental and old-fashioned." On one occasion they were trying to raise funds for a show at the same time that Tony's father was running for election to the Tory council. "You've got to come canvassing for my father," said Richardson. "But I'm a Socialist," Gaskill objected. "Look. Do you want this production or not? It's the only way to get my dad to give us the money." The Shipley Young Theatre got its show.

In 1948, Richardson won a scholarship to Wadham College at Oxford and turned his back on Bradford for good. The director Lindsay Anderson remembers him as a sparkly, well-known character around the university, apt to do unexpected things. He became president of the Oxford University Dramatic Society and directed Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* with bits of *Tamburlaine* added, set to the music of Wagner. He announced he would do *Peer Gynt* "all in rope." He advertised for a virgin to play Juliet, and eventually found her, or so he claimed, on a bus. According to the critic Irving Wardle, Richardson's "penetrating voice could be heard across the college dining hall, making declarations like 'I cannot *bear* Antony and Cleopatra. They are my noirest bêtes.' " Wardle noted that Richardson never seemed to get tired, and was "impervious to ridicule and incapable of losing his nerve."

William Gaskill, who followed Richardson from Bradford to





A villa in Port Antonio was our first love. The lazy, laid-back days on our patio. The sea-breeze nights. And my very own cook and maid. But last year we joined friends at a charming little inn near a bay in Ocho Rios. It was just lovely. And they made us feel so at home. This year? Who knows. Just so it's Jamaica.

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Exit Prospero

Oxford, described his ubiquitous influence as devastating: "Creative and destructive, encouraging and disheartening, serious and flippant. Without him I would never have become a director."

At the end of his university career, Richardson spent four months in the United States on $100. The love affair was instant, he reported. "The second I arrived in New York I knew this was the country I could be at home in. I wanted to stay." Instead, the aesthete from Yorkshire went home and changed British theater for good. After taking a directing course at the BBC and mounting a few productions in small London theaters (he refused to do time in the provinces), he made himself known to the great teacher and director George Devine. Devine recognized in Tony what was in advance of the moment, and asked him to collaborate with him in the making of the English Stage Company at the Royal Court Theatre.

There were other farsighted people involved in this theater, set up to serve new writing, but it was Devine's vision, Richardson's choice of new and contemporary foreign plays, and above all Richardson's temperament that informed the company from its beginning in 1955 to his departure in 1966. His daring choice of material, managerial decisiveness, modernness, irreverence, and classlessness helped make the English Stage Company important and disliked.

From the start, the theater advertised for new plays. Of the hundreds that were forthcoming, *Look Back in Anger*, by an out-of-work actor named John Osborne, was selected. Devine saw the manuscript first. He read three pages and took it to Tony. "This might be interesting." Richardson read the play immediately. "It confirmed everything we were trying to do. Columbus knew there was something out there when he set out for America. We knew, too—and there it was when the play arrived."

In Jimmy Porter, Osborne invented a contemporary malcontent with whom the younger generation could identify. Here were the qualities which one young critic had been seeking in vain in English plays: "The drift towards anarchy, the instinctive leftishness, the automatic rejection of 'official' attitudes, the surrealist sense of humor...the casual promiscuity, the sense of lacking a crusade worth fighting for, and, underlying all these, the determination that no one who dies shall go unmourned."

Richardson went on to direct Osborne's next plays, *The Entertainer*, in which Olivier played the one and only Archie Rice, and *Luther*, in which Albert Finney was catapulted to fame. Richardson's relationship with Osborne was always volatile, and Richardson was always the more understanding of the two. "John's an incredibly gifted writer, a great rhetorician. I'm fond of him, but he's a man of great viciousness. He's his own man and locked inside that very difficult personality."

In 1968, Osborne attacked Richardson, thinly disguised as a movie producer called K.L., in a one-act play called *The Hotel in Amsterdam*. K.L. is a ruthless, unstoppable creature, surrounded by con men and camp followers, "filling up on all of us, splitting us up." It is a touching irony that Osborne, staunchest of misanthropes, has now declared his love for Tony in his recently published memoirs: "No one has inflamed my creative passions more tantalizingly than Tony, nor savaged my moral sensibilities so cruelly. Whatever wayward impulse of torment he inflicted, his gangling, whiplash courage, struggling within that contorted figure, was awesomely moving and, at the last, unimpeachable."

Others whose careers Richardson propelled have responded as favorably. "We all benefited from his ruthlessness," Lindsay Anderson told me, "and his totally generous support of talent." The writers Arnold Wesker, Ann Jellicoe, Doris Lessing, Shelagh Delaney, and Nigel Dennis owe much to him, as do a vast number of established British actors, including Kenneth Haigh, Alan Howard, Nicol Williamson, Albert Finney, and the late Mary Ure and Colin Blakely.

At the Royal Court, Richardson directed seventeen plays between 1956 and 1964, introducing work by Eugene Ionesco and Bertolt Brecht as well as plays by Arthur Miller, William Faulkner, and Tennessee Williams. The critical response was often unfavorable, suggesting he was more impressive as an impresario than as a polisher of performance, yet he could always take his toughest adversaries by surprise with something brilliant, such as his fertile, Reinhardtian version of *Pericles* at Stratford, which he directed during the 1958–59 season, or his 1963 production in New York of Brecht's *Arturo Ui*.

Richardson had prepared his film career even before he helped launch the English Stage Company; he was a member of the Free Cinema movement, founded in the mid-fifties, which demanded a new aesthetic for British movies and which was influenced by the realistic backgrounds of early British documentaries. Tony wrote for the film magazines in which these ideas were explored, *Sequence* and *Sight and Sound*, and in 1955, with Karel Reisz, he co-directed *Momma Don't Allow*, a short film set in a jazz club. The anti-commercial Free Cinema movement merged with the ideologically committed Angry Young Men, noisily celebrating working-class culture. But it was Tony Richardson who put these ideas onto the screen: in 1958 he formed (with John Osborne and Harry Saltzman) Woodfall Films, and launched his first two movies, *Look Back in Anger* (with Richard Burton) and *The Entertainer*—shot on location and influenced in style by the French New Wave. By 1962 he had shaken off the theatrical stiffness of his first two films and directed two further explorations of working-class life, *A Taste of Honey*, about an unmarried mother, and *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*, about a Borstal boy (from a story by Alan Sillitoe). He also made possible, under Woodfall's banner, Lindsay Anderson's *This Sporting Life*, Karel Reisz's *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, and Richard Lester's *The Knack*.

It is not surprising that Richardson had little time for the formulaic American films of the thirties and forties (though he was a great admirer of John Ford). "You can't compare them to the work of Jean Renoir, or early Italian neo-realism, or Japanese film—movies made in real places, with actors working in real conditions."

By 1962, Tony was shooting *Tom Jones* in the West Country while Vanessa was at Stratford giving her legendary performance as Rosalind in *As You Like It*. The stage designer Jocelyn Herbert recalls her coming on location and longing for a quiet time with her husband. Instead, he would be surrounded by cast and crew. "She was starry-eyed, besotted by him, and it was tough on her. It took her quite a while to realize that Tony would always be surrounded by people, and that life was not going to be as she'd imagined."

The Richardsons moved into a handsome London house, 30 St. Peter's Square in Hammersmith, which cost £25,000. Their first daughter, Natasha Jane, was born in 1963. She remembers the doves, the toucans, the jungle-type garden, and the painted cupboards of her nursery, for this was the prototypical Richardson house. "My mother is no-

toriously bad at decorating," Natasha explained. "When they moved in, Papa challenged her at poker, to decide who would get to decorate each room. Of course she didn't win a single hand."

In 1963, *Tom Jones* was released. John Osborne had written the script from the Fielding novel, and Richardson had put together a fine cast, led by Albert Finney, to make an entertainment full of quick gags and set pieces—Hogarthian, full-blooded, and sexy. The project had been given the go-ahead by David Picker, head of production at United Artists. It cost $1.3 million and made $30 million. Picker subsequently described Richardson as "a consummate filmmaker, sometimes destroyed by his choice of material."

Tom Jones gave Richardson carte blanche to do what he wanted, and he chose to make Evelyn Waugh's *The Loved One*, about the American funeral business. Christopher Isherwood and Terry Southern worked on the script, and the cast included John Gielgud and Liberace. The gags, according to the critic Kenneth Tynan, came close to "the trip wires that separate effrontery from embarrassing overstatement." But this black comedy was unarguably innovative, and is viewed today by Buck Henry as "a great curiosity piece, done, as with everything of Tony's, with impeccable style."

In 1965 he began work on the film *Mademoiselle* with Jeanne Moreau, from an original script by Jean Genet. Moreau rather improbably played a repressed spinster, and shooting was not made easy by the fact that Richardson fell in love with the beautiful half-English, half-French star. "She's the greatest cinema actress in the world," he told the newspapers. "There's nothing she can't do."

"I was absolutely infatuated," he told me. "Jeanne was very exciting sexually, very interesting, and unlike other people. She was just a totally different kind of woman. Vanessa went through a very tough period. She was pregnant with Joely. She was still in love, and I was not. At one point she set off for China, then decided to try and come back to me. She got as far as Moscow, and got off the plane. But she didn't have a visa, so they threw her in jail."

Redgrave appeared as the deserted woman in Richardson's second film with Moreau, *The Sailor from Gibraltar*, an ill-fated, hastily shot production based on a story by Marguerite Duras. The two women had no scenes together, and Redgrave behaved impeccably throughout the drama.

Had Tony wanted to marry Moreau? "No. Oh, no. Never. I had no illusion that it was going to be a long relationship. I knew Jeanne had had an immense amount of experience, and was going to go on having it. Later, when I was very unhappy with Jeanne, Vanessa was very supportive."

When news of divorce proceedings broke, the press found Tony rehearsing Vanessa in a segment of the film trilogy *Red and Blue*.

After the two films with Moreau, Richardson surprised his critics with what many consider his masterpiece, *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, a quasi-absurdist vaudevillian epic take on the Crimean War, written by Charles Wood and shot by David Watkin, with animated interludes by Richard Williams. (Richardson banned the critics from the opening, describing them, in a letter to *The Times* of London, as "a group of acidulated intellectual eunuchs hugging their prejudices like feather boas.") John Gielgud, Trevor Howard, and Vanessa Redgrave starred.

The film came out in 1968, the year of the student riots in Paris, the same year that Tony announced that it would be a "super idea" if there were red flags on every Oxford college. "I was never a Communist," he later disclosed. "I'm an anarchist, with no real interest in politics."

His life-style was decidedly un-Communist. He now owned a house in Egerton Crescent in South Kensington, an apartment in a fifteenth-century palace in Paris, and a restored peasant hamlet in the South of France on the wooded hill north of Saint-Tropez called Le Nid du Duc, near La Garde Freinet.

At Le Nid du Duc in the summer, Richardson presided over a house party of about twenty people, who would gather for meals at a long trestle table under the trees. Over the years you might have found Jack Nicholson, David Hockney, the wife of the head of the French foreign service, Lee Radziwill seated alongside a toothless cleaning lady from the local village, John Gielgud, Jessica Mitford, Rudolf Nureyev, two or three hairdressers from Los Angeles, the local tennis coach, and everyone's children, including Tony's three daughters.

While Tony reigned over Le Nid du Duc, that other great host of the region, Sam Spiegel, would hold court on his yacht in the harbor of Saint-Tropez, and once or twice during a season Tony's raffish crowd would descend upon Sam's sedate boat crowd and then beat a hasty retreat. Spiegel could never figure out why anyone wanted to go up a dust track to Richardson's place, and refused to climb the hill until very near the end of his life (in 1985), when curiosity got the better of him and he accepted an invitation to lunch. A particularly good meal was prepared in his honor. (Tony always used to go down to the market in Saint-Tropez at dawn, and bring back giant trays of Cavaillon melons and peaches and haricots verts, along with fresh loups de mer and tartes tropeziennes.)

We all waited nervously for the arrival of Spiegel. He was late. Just as we were beginning to give up on the elderly tycoon, one of the children spotted him *walking* ahead of his chauffeur-driven car along the precipitous, rock-strewn approach to the main house of Le Nid du Duc. Slowly he came up to us and accepted a glass of house wine. "My chauffeur couldn't make it with my weight," he said. It was an inspired piece of one-upmanship, and Tony was absolutely delighted.

Just as Tony made Spiegel perform, so he demanded performance of everybody else. "You see," my children used to explain to me, "he's a dramatist." From an early age, Joely and Natasha starred in Nid du Duc productions initiated by their father. There was the musical of the life of Saint Tropez, written by the playwright John Mortimer, lit by Tony, which concluded with a flock of doves released from garbage cans placed around the swimming pool to the sound of Handel's *Water Music*. There was the performance of *Gypsy* with Natasha starring as Rose, and Joely as Gypsy, backed up by a chorus consisting of the wives of John Mortimer and John Osborne and a transvestite from Milan.

David Hockney remembers Natasha, aged ten, gesturing histrionically and declaring, "I'm not going to be an actress!" Fat chance, he said to himself. On one occasion Vanessa Redgrave came to stay, during rehearsals for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and made all the children playing fairies miserable by dressing them as poor scavengers when they wanted pretty costumes with wings. Tony saved the day by deciding instead to do a comic scene from the play, in which he played Peter Quince, and Vanessa's boyfriend, Timothy Dalton, Bottom.

And always up at Le Nid du Duc there was a combination of lovers old and new living in reasonable harmony to the infinite dismay of the married men unable to

Exit Prospero

conceal one paltry mistress. It would be wrong, though, to conclude that Tony was an entirely benign ruler of his island. On occasion he was more Ariel than Prospero, and he liked nothing better than to stir up a drama; if people burst into tears, he would simply look surprised. "What he liked," one actress explained, "was to pick on someone. You knew your turn was coming and you had to brace yourself. Sometimes he'd draw out a story from you you didn't want to tell, about someone you'd slept with years before, and you'd tell the story in front of this gauping group of people."

"His great fear in life was boredom," the wife of a famous playwright told me. "He once drove my husband to the airport in Nice and returned with me to Le Nid du Duc. 'I suspect you hope he has a plane crash, don't you?' Tony said. 'Then you'll be a nice rich little widow.' " The loving wife was very shocked.

On another occasion Tony played the detective in a game of murder. When the lights went up for the interrogation, he told one pretty teenager that he was sure she wasn't the murderer—he'd seen her flirting with Roman Polanski. "I don't want to go into details," he went on, "it was too disgusting." The particular Lolita under fire burst into tears and fled, declaring, "How could you think I've been with that old man?" Tony was very pleased, and Polanski sat there like the cat who ate the canary. The rest of the guests didn't know whether to laugh or be angry, till Tony tipped the mood and made magic again.

Vacation drama, of course, was a pale substitute for the real drama, making movies. Only on a set was Richardson completely happy. After *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, he made five movies (including *Ned Kelly*, starring Mick Jagger), not all successful. In 1977 his second homage to Fielding, *Joseph Andrews*, came out, but did not restore his commercial reputation.

In 1982 he made *The Border* with Jack Nicholson, an impressive, muckraking story of a border-patrol officer policing illegal Mexican immigrants on the Rio Grande. Nicholson admired his work; Richardson in turn admired Nicholson and learned a lot from him about action. "There's a fineness about Jack's taste as an actor that there never was, for example, with Larry Olivier's. Larry was a very stupid man with wonderful instincts, but he never surprised me."

Richardson's next feature, *The Hotel New Hampshire*, from John Irving's novel about the eccentric Berry family (with Jodie Foster and Rob Lowe), was released in 1984. The film suggests that a family can transcend the violence and hate in the world. The piece was not liked, except by a few devotees who believe it was misunderstood.

In the last few years Richardson made two courtroom dramas for television, as well as a mini-series on Beryl Markham and *The Phantom of the Opera*, with Charles Dance and Burt Lancaster, all of which were praised. He also shot a short film for HBO of Hemingway's "Hills Like White Elephants," with a script by his friends Joan Didion and John Gregory Dunne.

Several years ago Richardson commissioned Alice Arlen to write a screenplay of Didion's novel *Democracy*, which he subsequently rewrote. (He always worked on his screenplays.) "If I do one thing before I die, I want to make *Democracy*. It's just a perfect subject for a real romantic love story and a big commercial success. It isn't political at all," he added, which came as rather a surprise to those of us who had read the original.

Meanwhile, there was a life to be led, a new shipment of exotic birds to be viewed down in the Los Angeles harbor, a falconry meet of the California Hawking Association up in Los Banos, a visit to an art gallery, or a longer visit to a distant place with Jeremy Fry. Tony was always a serious and intrepid traveler. A few months before he died, I asked him, Where on the planet is magic? "Paris, Le Nid du Duc, of course. Italy, the slopes of Everest, Sri Lanka, Bali. Some of Thailand, lots of Brazil and Mexico." And where is hell? "Anywhere north and cold" came the answer. And L.A.? "L.A.'s not magic, but it's the only great capital city where you can live out-of-doors." And when you're too old for tennis? I asked as we picked up our menus at Spago. What about getting old? "That's just something you accept," Tony answered, as if to deflect the shadows of mortality. He glanced down at his menu. "Never order lamb," he said. "It's a very dirty meat."

On November 14, around 1:30 P.M., Tony died in what he had ironically referred to as "the Garden Suite" of St. Vincent's Hospital in Los Angeles. His family, including Vanessa Redgrave, were at his bedside. There was no funeral, no memorial service (his ashes will be scattered at Le Nid du Duc), just a party up at the house. It was directed, of course, by Natasha. Tony had been particularly fond of a small tank of tropical fish in his hospital room. So huge colored paper fish were hung from the rafters of the living room. There were lavish white flowers, and above the fireplace a blown-up photograph of Tony, wearing a Stetson and directing a movie. It was a crowded party, a strangely happy one, to send this irreplaceable man on his way. □

Lynda Carter

(Continued from page 136) B.C.C.I. was dubbed by *Time* magazine, and point to recent congressional testimony by Federal Reserve officials that there has been no evidence of wrongdoing at First American. In the past year, Clifford and Altman have spent days on end being questioned under oath by prosecutors and bank regulators and testifying in New York and Washington. Their personal legal bills have been said to approach a million dollars a month.

The buzz around town is that an indictment for bank fraud may be forthcoming from Manhattan district attorney Robert Morgenthau, the most aggressive prosecutor in the case until the U.S. Justice Department became fully engaged. According to conventional wisdom, Clifford, who turned eighty-five in December, is too old to be indicted. But his protégé's fate is another matter. "Whither Robert Altman? The same thing as Mike Milken," a government investigator speculated. "It'll be a minimum-security setting, very comfortable, and when he gets out—he won't be in for that long—he'll go on with his life."

"To tell you the truth, I know my husband has done nothing," says Carter. "I know that he is a strong and brilliant guy, a loving husband, a great father, a wonderful friend, and we love each other and are going forward. And to hell with them!"

"Them" is a varied multitude of cads

Lynda Carter

and bounders who make up official Washington. It's the press, of course, which has sought "to portray me as a social-climbing bimbette," Carter complains, "when all I have ever done in this town is to try to be supportive of people's charities, knowing that they will be able to raise more money if my name is on their invitation." It's a host of prosecutors whom Carter imagines rubbing their hands together and gloating, "Oh, goody. This will really make my career. If I can put the scalps of Clark Clifford and Robert Altman on my belt...that can be my claim to fame." And it's "run-amok" members of Congress who are "scapegoating these private citizens," she says, "my husband and his best friend, his most beloved friend," for base political advantage.

Carter is still steamed over the performance last September of Representative Maxine Waters, Democrat of Los Angeles, at a House Banking Committee hearing at which the two lawyers attempted to explain themselves.

"I am thoroughly disgusted with the high and mighty, with the privileged," Waters raged in her opening statement. "I come from a district where people are poor, where people are struggling, where people go to jail when they steal a loaf of bread. They're shot by cops if they dare to make a wrong move.... The mighty and the rich are getting away with unusual criminal activity, and I'm anxious to be involved in these hearings. I do not intend to be nice to anybody."

"And then she threw down her paper and she sat there scowling at the camera," recounts Carter. "And then, as soon as the camera was off of her, she got up and walked out and she never returned for the testimony or the questioning."

"I'm sure she feels the need to try and protect her husband," Waters responds coolly, acknowledging that she left the hearing room and didn't come back. "But if she knows anything about me at all, she knows I don't back up for rich people, movie stars, or anybody else. And while she has a right to her opinion, she may not want to get too far out there. She may not have a limb to crawl back on."

Wonder Woman, of course, would have coldcocked the congresswoman—but not Lynda Carter.

"I'd rather do it in a different way than that—like mentioning her name to you."

Robert Altman's phone manner is stolid and unflappable—the voice of respectability.

"Lynda is a very strong individual," he says in a careful, lawyerly cadence, "and she also has extensive experience in dealing with the press, albeit in a rather different context. Not necessarily in a rather different context," he revises. "The tabloid mentality she has dealt with for years. It gives her a greater understanding of the way that these things operate.

"I think she handles an unhappy situation exceedingly well," he continues, returning to his theme. "As I said, I don't comment on what is transpiring except when I give my appearances. I don't think it is appropriate for me."

The only time Altman loosens up is when he recites a favorable *TV Guide* review of his wife's performance in *Posing,* a TV movie about baring it all for *Playboy* that aired in November on CBS. At one point he actually laughs—at a reference in the review to the way Carter fills out a negligee.

They met over dinner in Memphis in the summer of 1982. He was there visiting the headquarters of Maybelline, a subsidiary of the Schering-Plough Corporation, one of Clifford & Warnke's blue-chip clients. She was there as the spokesmodel for the cosmetics company, touching down in the midst of a singing tour and recovering from her recently ended, horrific first marriage, to her manager, Ron Samuels.

According to several of Carter's friends, Samuels, who met her in 1976, shortly after she snagged the Wonder Woman role, and married her five months later, was a jealous, volatile man who isolated her from everyone but her immediate family and took complete control of her life. One friend of Carter's, former *Hollywood Reporter* columnist Sue Cameron, says that had she known that Samuels was going to visit Carter's trailer and introduce himself, "I would have waited on the roof with an anvil, and dropped it on his head."

"I was married a little over four years," Carter says, "and then I realized that the guy didn't really even love me, that it was all about money. And he went out on me all the time and he was horribly indiscreet and everything. He slept with everyone, I found out. I mean, like I say, he was indiscriminate.

"I wish him well now," Carter continues. "It took me a while to get over it." In fact, she is not yet over it: a discussion of her ex-husband quickly reduces her to sobs. "You know, I was young," she goes on. "I had no experience in love. I had directed all of my energies towards my work, and was very successful at that, and had not understood or paid any attention to my heart. I loved this person without question. I was like the faithful dog."

"You've got the wrong guy," Samuels says when reached at his Beverly Hills entertainment company. "She must be talking about someone else. I have a clear conscience.... I don't know what she's talking about."

"He really did well with Lynda," says tennis legend Chris Evert, who somehow has managed to stay friendly with both, "and he did well before he met Lynda. ... But that was a little awkward, trying not to take sides. I think, in his defense, that whenever a marriage breaks up, both parties are at fault."

It was during her first marriage that Carter became known for being "difficult" on the set, a lingering reputation that made several producers wary as she began beating the bushes recently for television work.

"It wasn't just on the set; she was difficult everywhere," says Doug Cramer, executive producer of *Wonder Woman,* who cast her in the original ABC series and kept her when it moved to CBS two years later, because she had "a fantastic body, the greatest blue eyes in the world, and an incredible ability to be enormously seductive while at the same time prim and proper.

"The difficulty grew out of several things: one was her insecurity," Cramer continues. "She was fresh out of nowhere and overnight a star, on magazine covers, in great demand as a guest star, and everybody wanted her in her Wonder Woman outfit, which was humiliating for her. It was Wonder Woman with her body in it, rather than Lynda Carter." Another factor was the sheer exhaustion of starring in an hour-long series, which eventually ran thirty-two episodes a year and required a seven-day shoot for each episode, while being prodded by Samuels to sing and spend her nights cutting albums in a recording studio.

Cramer says he found a changed woman—and a better actress—when he cast Carter last May in Danielle Steel's *Daddy,* which, when aired in October, was NBC's top-rated movie of 1991. "In recent years, she has really studied her craft, and spent a lot of time working with a coach in New York, and improved enormously," Cramer says. "Everyone in the

company loved her. She knew all her lines and she was always on the set before she had to be."

Her relationship with Robert Altman deserves some of the credit.

Robert Altman's career as Clark Clifford's fair-haired boy began long ago. "He came in as a clerk . . . and finished his law training and passed the bar," recalls the man whom Altman persists in calling "Mr. Clifford" despite the latter's desire to be addressed simply as "Clark." "And he's been with us twenty years," Clifford continues. "I have found him exceedingly bright and a real workaholic. I *like* workaholics in law firms."

Clifford saw young Altman as the son he never had, Lynda Carter theorizes, and picked him for a series of choice assignments, which Altman fulfilled with distinction. In September 1977, when President Jimmy Carter asked Clifford to defend his embattled budget director, Bert Lance, against a host of government and congressional investigators looking into dubious doings at Lance's bank in Georgia, it was Altman who counseled Lance to go on the attack against Congress, a strategy that nearly worked. When Lance was finally forced out of the Carter administration, and Clifford & Warnke defended him in the ensuing welter of litigation, Altman "rose substantially in my estimation," Clifford told *Washingtonian* magazine.

By the early 1980s, Altman had become the Establishment sage's most trusted aide, playing a key role in the complex legal battles and negotiations that made Clifford chairman and Altman president of the Arab-owned First American Bankshares—and eventually thrust them, stage center, into the current controversy. In a deal that they would ultimately have cause to regret, but that cemented their bond even further, Altman and Clifford turned a $9.8 million pre-tax profit by borrowing $14.9 million from B.C.C.I. to buy stock in First American, which they then sold at allegedly inflated prices to an accommodating super-rich Arab eighteen months later. Further tangling the web, the two men continued to provide legal counsel to both B.C.C.I. and First American, while directing the affairs of the latter—a situation seemingly rife with conflict of interest.

Altman has been cast by some as the villain of the piece—portrayed in press accounts as "a cross between Ivan Boesky and Gordon Gekko," Lynda Carter complains. One investigative journalist told *Washingtonian* magazine, "Clark Clifford sold his soul to the devil. Bob Altman was the broker."

Altman is, by all accounts, a sharp lawyer and a tough businessman, whose instincts were honed while growing up in a family that celebrated the spirit of competitiveness. The son of Ivy League–trained Washington attorneys—his mother, Sophie, one of very few women in her day to attend Yale Law School, went on to produce award-winning public-affairs television shows—Altman was a varsity swimmer at the University of Wisconsin in the 1960s, an editor of the law review at George Washington University, and plays tennis for keeps on his private court in Potomac. Yet he is also known as a warm and loyal friend—who didn't drop his old Washington buddies when he and his glamorous new wife started moving in more rarefied social circles—as well as a supportive husband and a doting father. Carter likes to tell the story—as do several of her friends—of how one evening last summer, in the midst of the blossoming B.C.C.I. scandal, Altman interrupted a conference call with his high-priced lawyers in order to minister to their sobbing three-year-old son.

He and Carter were wed in Pacific Palisades eighteen months after they met. Among the guests were Loni Anderson, with whom Carter was soon to star in a short-lived series for NBC; Ed McMahon; Barbara Mandrell; and Agha Hasan Abedi, who was indicted on bank-fraud and racketeering charges by a federal grand jury last November. Clark Clifford was best man.

"I was greatly struck when she and Bob got to know each other and became engaged," says Clifford, whose own phone manner is mellifluous and chatty. "I took them out and the three of us all had a drink together. And while he stepped away to take phone calls, she told me that she had had an interesting career in television up to that time. 'But,' she said, 'I'm now prepared to change my career from actress to that of wife and mother. That's what I want very much to become.' I was really quite impressed by it. She was completely sincere."

During their honeymoon on the ski slopes of Deer Valley, Utah, Carter was rescued by Blaine Trump after falling down the mountain. "Lynda is the type of person who has always worked hard to get where she is," says Trump, a close friend since that chance meeting. "She has very solid beliefs and commitments to her family and her life, and I think that commitment has gotten her through just about every situation she has faced in life. She's not a quitter. And she's not afraid to take chances."

"I think she's a corker!" Clark Clifford says.

With her cleavage-revealing Bob Mackie gowns and skintight leather pantsuits—to say nothing of her Hollywood, albeit television, celebrity—Carter was an immediate Washington sensation. The invitations poured in and kept on coming—to attend state dinners at the White House and the Congressional Club's luncheons for the First Lady, dinner parties with Cabinet members and the Speaker of the House, even to sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" at the Democratic National Convention. In short order she threw herself into such sterling causes as the American Ballet Theatre, the American Red Cross, and Marilyn Quayle's favorite charity event, Race for the Cure, a fund-raiser to combat breast cancer. The last involvement—in which Carter's role was to snag celebrity runners for race day—brought her fast friendships with the vice president's wife and a host of other prominent women.

"She delivered the celebrities," says race organizer and Hallmark Cards Inc. lobbyist Rae Evans, "and, more importantly, she delivered her own body—which was getting bigger by the month with child. [The Altmans eventually produced Jamie Clifford, now four, and fifteen-month-old Jessica Carter.] For virtually every event I asked her to do, she would wake up, throw up, and show up."

In the grand Washington tradition of "showing the flag," in which public figures under fire demonstrate that they have nothing, but nothing, to be ashamed of, Evans hosted an extremely visible lunch for Carter last October at the Occidental restaurant, attended by Marilyn Quayle and other women, whose names were purposely given to *The Washington Post*. Carter says the wife of the frequently harpooned vice president has been especially supportive, phoning occasionally to empathize and to tease Carter about her addiction to bee pollen, sugar blockers, and other health fads.

"Lynda's just Washington's little darling—our own little show pony," says Mark Robertson, a vice president of the public-relations firm Hill and Knowlton, and a keen observer of capital life. "It's

not that she was trying to have a social presence. I think the town tried to *make* her have some kind of social presence. Everybody in Washington has always been intrigued with Hollywood and vice versa. The trick is to get media coverage for your fund-raising event and to have attractive people. It's like hanging a lamb chop in the window."

In 1987, Carter went into semi-retirement, stopping her singing engagements in Las Vegas and Atlantic City, selling her eighteen-acre ranch in Malibu, and finding the $2.6 million mansion in Potomac while it was still under construction as a "spec house." The builder was hoping for a Saudi sheikh, or perhaps a wealthy Iranian exile, until the actress just happened on the property. In due course, it became a mecca for mixing and mingling, especially on Sundays, when Speaker of the House Jim Wright, House Majority Whip Tony Coelho, and the much-feared House Energy and Commerce Committee chairman, John Dingell, were apt to drop by with their wives to watch the Redskins game.

"There were three or four couples who would have an occasional dinner out," recalls Wright, now back home in Fort Worth, "and sometimes in November, when each of the girls had birthdays, along about that time we'd all have a party. And during football seasons particularly, Bob and Lynda would invite us to come over to their place, and during the half we'd get out and toss the football."

Not that all was sweetness and light. In the spring of 1989, Coelho quit Congress over publicity concerning questionable financing for a stock transaction, and Wright was forced to resign the Speakership over allegations that he had violated House ethics rules with an unusually generous book-royalty agreement. Altman and Clifford tried to help both men make graceful exits.

"Bob was ever present whenever I needed any help or advice," Wright recalls. "It was a stunning experience to me because I had not dreamed it would ever come to anything. . . . I was shocked and in a state of, I suppose, near despondency. To see everything I'd worked for and believed in all my life jeopardized. . . My blood pressure went way up, I couldn't sleep at night. Toward the end of the time, there was a gaggle of newspeople at my house every evening and every morning—fourteen, sixteen, eighteen of them standing out there in the street and shouting simplistic questions. And the long-lens photographers shooting at me when I went out trimming my roses. I was beginning to feel like a caged animal.

"Bob sat with me the morning after I'd decided what to do. He and Clark were two to whom I had confided," Wright continues. "I sat that morning before the speech that I made, and was making notes and writing part of it, and Bob sat there with me."

His resignation speech's most memorable line: "Bring this period of mindless cannibalism to an end." In his view, history is repeating itself at the expense of Clifford and Altman—and Lynda Carter.

Marny Clifford has heard it all before. "In this vale of tears which I call Washington, it's very unusual to have someone like Lynda," says Clark Clifford's eighty-three-year-old wife, a native New Englander who has lived in Washington since the Truman administration. "She's a very simple person. There's nothing complicated about Lynda at all. . . . The knives were out for her the moment she came here, because she's so beautiful. Washington can be, I do believe, one of the meanest places in the world. I'm not a great fan of Washington. I remember Frank Pace, who used to be secretary of the army. He told me once that whenever he got off a plane here, he could feel a sense of poison in the air."

Among Carter's first friends in town was Adrienne Arsht Feldman, the socially ambitious wife of lawyer Myer Feldman, counsel to President Kennedy in the early sixties. *The Green Book,* Washington's Social Register, lists her residences as Potomac and Palm Beach. She latched onto Carter as soon as she arrived, and shepherded her through the charity scene until Debbie Dingell, wife of the powerful House-committee chairman, took her place. Carter thought Feldman's tart tongue was harmless—until the incident concerning her own mother.

Jean Carter, who had raised Lynda and her older brother and sister after their father abruptly moved out when Lynda was ten, had worked nights at the Motorola factory in Phoenix, making component parts for—oddly enough—television sets. She was in town from Scottsdale one day in 1988. Feldman called to invite Lynda to an impromptu lunch at the Westin Hotel, to celebrate the birthday of a mutual acquaintance.

"My mother's in town visiting—can I bring her?" Carter asked, according to people familiar with the episode.

"Well, I would love for *you* to come," Feldman replied after an awkward pause. "But your mother just wouldn't fit in. I hope you understand."

Carter stammered her understanding and hung up the phone. A minute later she called back. She was enraged.

"Never, ever, call me again! I don't want to have anything to do with you!" Carter shouted into the receiver when Feldman picked up. "Lose my number!" she added. "You've treated my mother like shit."

Devastated, Feldman simply canceled the lunch. She enlisted Debbie Dingell, a lobbyist for General Motors, to intercede with Carter on her behalf. Eventually an uneasy truce was reached, though their relationship soured once again after Carter suspected Feldman of giving to the *Washington Post* "Personalities" column the news of her precarious second pregnancy, the last three months of which she was forced to spend in bed. Neither Carter nor Feldman will discuss these matters on the record.

It is, in any event, not an atypical Washington story.

Consider the insights of two socially conscious Washingtonians—Washington Man and Washington Woman—who offer them on the condition of anonymity.

"Lynda was very nervous when she first came to town," says Washington Man, "and quite fearful of the Washington scene."

"Lynda had an agenda when she got here," says Washington Woman.

"My sense," says Washington Man, "is that Lynda's career will always come first."

"My sense," says Washington Woman, "is that Lynda is always just half a step behind."

"Washington was a lot of fun for Lynda," says Washington Man. "She was kind of overwhelmed and surprised that she became so successful socially here. I don't think in Hollywood that she's that big a deal."

"She got a decorator," says Washington Woman, "but not the *right* one. She picked the wrong charity and didn't stick with it. You should *stand* by something you believe in. It may even become chic."

"The truth of the matter," says Washington Man, "is that the house is overdone."

"Totally off the record, on deep background," says Washington Woman, "like on *The McLaughlin Group,* let me give you a prediction. I predict that their house will be on the market soon and they'll move to California."

Lynda Carter

"There is nothing that I aspire to in this town, I assure you," Lynda Carter says, comfortably ensconced in her library. "I have always been a working person. I come from humble beginnings. I don't care about it," she says, speaking of fame and social standing. "I've had it, I've done it. I don't need it. It holds no cachet for me."

So she's hoping to land a TV series, and maybe even a big-screen movie. She has already been told by a producer, while attending a party on one of her visits to L.A., "God, I'm so glad, you're so hot now."

"And I hadn't done anything," she marvels. "No movies had aired. 'I think you're just doing great,' he says. 'Your name is everywhere. I'm hearing your name all the time.' And I turned to one of my closest friends and I said, 'Only in Hollywood—only in Hollywood do they think any publicity is good publicity.' "

And if she ends up making a lot of money, so much the better—even though, she hastens to add, "my husband is a man of substance. He certainly doesn't rely upon me.

"Robert will continue to practice with Clifford as long as Clifford is realistically able," Carter says, even in the face of her husband's possible indictment. "This is a terrible time. This is not a walk in the park. But in my mind I couldn't care less about anything in life that is material. . . . I can't buy another ball gown. I've got enough clothes to last me, enough jewelry. We don't need to consume and we don't need to spend money. That's not something that holds a great fascination for me. I assume we'll be able to feed and house our children, and clothe them. If we have to do whatever, I don't care."

And, typically, Carter sees a bright side to the catastrophe that has befallen her. "I sort of like the whole idea of the nineties and restraint anyway, especially after the eighties."

"There's not much I can do except to say, 'We care about you,' " says Carter's friend Jack Valenti, a former aide to Lyndon Johnson who is now president of the Motion Picture Association of America. "As L.B.J. would say, just hunker down like a jackass in a hailstorm and let the wild winds blow for a while, and everything will be O.K." □

Gay's Liberation

(Continued from page 143) about the Via Veneto. Back in New York, Nan wrote him moony letters until he cabled her to come join him. With great animation, Nan, at fifty-eight still a beautiful, wide-eyed postdeb, tells me what happened next.

"On the way to lunch I went to Alitalia and booked the ticket for the next day," she remembers. "I called Mummy and Daddy and said, 'Can I have dinner with you tonight?' Which was a strange thing to ask. Of course, they said yes. I was just doing it one step at a time. I told them that I had received a cable from Gay asking me to marry him. It was totally untrue, a bald-faced lie. Mummy said, 'No, you have to be married here with the family.' I think I wept and carried on. I know I did. My mother said, 'You don't know what it's like to live with a writer. You weren't brought up for it.' But my father said, 'Go ahead.'

"The next morning I called Gay's parents very early and asked would they please send Gay's baptismal certificate to the *Times* bureau in Rome—we were getting married. I was making this all up out of whole cloth. And I never do things like this, I promise you. . . . I then asked at Random House to take a week off. I had only been there three months. I was very shy. We wore white gloves in those days. Whenever anyone in my area would use a four-letter word, they would say, 'Sorry, Nan.' When they asked why I wanted the week off, I told them I was getting married. I was burning all my bridges.

"That afternoon my mother came in and during lunch we went shopping for my trousseau. There was so much logistics involved that there wasn't time for reflection. On the plane that night, the man next to me, just making conversation, said, 'Where are you going?' I said to Rome. He said, 'Why?' I said, 'To get married.' And for the first time, I thought, Holy good night—what have I done?"

When she got off the plane, she saw Gay in the lounge, his dark head buried in his sleeve, the image of dejection. He sensed what was about to happen. "To me, marriage meant living a boring, predictable life," he explains. "My parents' home was too stable." But over long walks in the Borghese Gardens—"like a prelude to prison," Nan recalls—he said he would give it a try. If it failed, Nan would receive no alimony. Although Nan had told their parents they were to be married in a church, Gay refused. A civil wedding was arranged by one of Talese's heroes, Irwin Shaw, whom he had met once in Paris and happened to run into in Rome. Shaw threw them a party afterward. For a young writer who traced his lineage from Fitzgerald through Shaw, the auguries seemed right.

A telephone call from Nan's mother in Rye to their Rome hotel was the initial upset. Susan Ahearn had learned from a *Times* wedding notice about the civil ceremony. Outraged, she told Nan that a wedding outside the church was invalid. Nan began to cry. Gay grabbed the phone and told his mother-in-law not to interfere. "Who do you think you are?" she replied.

It was a fateful remark. The newlyweds did have the Ahearns over to dinner in their shabby apartment (a third-floor room in the house that Gay and Nan would acquire in 1974 for $175,000). But that was the last time Gay would see them. "I think I felt challenged in a serious way," he says. "I knew I had to break that relationship." When their daughters were born, Nan visited Rye with them by herself. She was a traditional wife who had snared an unconventional husband. "I knew when we got married that I was going to go along on his journey," she says. "I had, in Hemingway's term, 'signed on.' Our lives would take the direction that Gay wanted them to take."

Gay wanted Nan to work. Suggesting that she enter publishing, since she read books all the time anyway, he had arranged her job interview at Random House. She always assured him that if he ever asked her to quit she would. "I really did everything I could to please him," she says. "I wanted to make sure that the path was clear for him to do his work. I took it on myself to run interference for him in the world, because the little things will upset him."

Once, they were heading off for a weekend in Gay's 1957 Triumph sports car and he ran a stop sign in Central Park. A policeman pulled them over and asked, "Didn't you see the stop sign?" "Of course I didn't see it," Gay replied. "If I had seen the stop sign, I would have stopped." As Gay searched for the registration, Nan, having just renewed it, knew he wouldn't find it. "Gay, darling," she

murmured, "it's on our fireplace mantel." He turned to her and said, "What? You're telling me that the registration is on the mantel?" He got out of the car, slammed the door, and declared, "Officer, you can have it all. Keep my car, my license, my wife—everything. I'm leaving." He started walking away. The policeman, alarmed, called him back, pleading, "All right, all right, just go on."

He was an artist who was tripped up by everyday life. She was the wife who smoothed the way. That was the situation in 1973, when he began managing a massage parlor two blocks from Nan's office, engaging in open infidelities, and talking about all of it to curious and exploitive members of the press.

Gay went about researching sex in America with the same blinkered intensity with which he had pursued the *Times* and the Mafia. His friends had occasionally been bored by his monomania. Now, as he clinically quizzed women he barely knew about their sexual habits while his own wife chatted coolly at the other end of the table, they became embarrassed as well. "Everybody got tired of talking about blowjobs at dinner," says David Halberstam. "It was a long period. For ten years it was all he would talk about." One evening, Talese and A. E. Hotchner and their wives attended a formal dinner at the East Side home of an investment banker. With mounting alarm, Hotchner noticed Gay in animated conversation with the women on both sides of him. "What we're discussing is masturbation," Gay announced. He had been reporting the results of a recent study on the percentage of men and women who masturbate; the women were skeptical. "Let's go around the table and everyone say whether you masturbate or not," Talese proposed. Hotchner tried to call it off, or—a compromise—to hand out secret ballots. No. Gay insisted on polling the table, and almost everyone replied.

Or take a smaller dinner, this one at Elaine's to toast Susan Cheever's novel *Looking for Work*, which Nan had published. Gay zeroed in on *Times* movie critic Janet Maslin, whose then boyfriend, Ben Sonnenberg, a victim of multiple sclerosis, walked with canes. Once it was established that Sonnenberg couldn't get to Elaine's in the snow, Talese confronted Maslin. What was it like to have sex with a cripple? She wouldn't reply. Talese rephrased the question, again and again and again. When Susan Colgan, a friend of Cheever's, tried to deflect him, he turned on her. In a rage, Colgan retreated to the bathroom to compose herself. "Gone off to the ladies' room to cry?" he asked when she came back.

What was Nan thinking? She would never say. Research aside, Gay was clearly rebelling against his Catholic upbringing. Was he also attacking his wife? Gay's mother was an emotionally remote woman who would not react to him: in *Unto the Sons* he describes how once, as a toddler, he placed his hand in her pocket for greater intimacy, only to have her firmly and wordlessly remove it. His wife, no matter how outrageously he behaved, stayed just as cool. "I do think he would probably have done the book a lot faster if I had stormed out," Nan says. "I don't react in an emotional way very often. I don't lose my temper. I think Gay would have relished a blowup. I couldn't do it." She concentrated on her daughters: "I don't think the marriage would have survived six months at that time without children." And she left Random House, where Gay had placed her, for Simon & Schuster, a house he thought (correctly) was not right for her. Instead of a job she could drop at Gay's request, she now had a career. No longer was her primary identity as Gay's wife. "I think when one is exploring the world of liberated sexuality, one doesn't need a wife," she says. "I felt unnecessary as Gay's wife." She emphasized her middle initial, "A.," as if to remind people that she was an Ahearn before she was a Talese. "If I were only Gay's wife and he was behaving that way, I would be crushed," she reflects.

The rumbling of hostile press, which had from the start made Gay feel that he was "writing this book in Macy's window," crescendoed with jackhammer force upon the publication of *Thy Neighbor's Wife* in early 1980. Reviews scrutinized the author more than the book, branding him a despicable husband and father. "Being the focus of all that media attention, that glare, is just horrible," Nan says. "You become objects for other people to toss around. You become a media toy." Ironically, the bad publicity that derailed Gay's career propelled hers. "As a result of being the wife in *Thy Neighbor's Wife*, Nan became famous," Gay says. "These days fame and notoriety are the same thing. Her career shot up. She became the victim star." Nan went from Simon & Schuster to Houghton Mifflin, eventually rising to editor in chief and publisher, before settling at Doubleday with her own imprint (her authors include Pat Conroy, Margaret Atwood, and Ian McEwan).

But Gay felt abandoned and alone. In line to succeed Jerzy Kosinski as president of PEN, he saw his candidacy scuttled by the artillery that preceded the book's appearance. Even more painful, of all the people he knew, only Pete Hamill telephoned to offer sympathy—and Hamill wasn't even a close friend. "It isolated me," Talese says. "Not me and Nan. Me. She was as supportive as I guess she could be, but I was alone." They had no allies, in large part because the ugly commentary concentrated on their marriage, a marriage that even their intimates found baffling. It was as if the press had put the marriage on trial, and the Taleses' friends, appalled by Gay's insistence on making public what other men do discreetly, feared being caught in the middle. "The things being written were just awful, but no one said anything to us," Nan recalls. "It was like being burned at a pillar and everyone walking by and nobody saying anything."

This was the atmosphere in which Talese contemplated his next book. His defiant side wanted to do something "even more disgusting," as he puts it: the story of a motel owner and voyeur who keeps a detailed chronicle of other people's sexual behavior. Nan told him he was out of his mind. Thinking a portrait of an Italian-American would be more respectable, he considered DiMaggio and Sinatra, but neither man would sit for it. His next idea was the Yankees. Attending games in owner George Steinbrenner's box, he met Lee Iacocca, who seemed to offer the solution. Over the next several months, Iacocca allowed Talese to travel with him, attend meetings, and stay in his Bloomfield Hills house. Talese envisioned a book with the Italian-American entrepreneur in the foreground and the turmoil of the automobile industry finely drawn behind.

Gradually, Talese became disenchanted with the project. "When you get to a certain age, being under the umbrella of these powerful, powerful people gets a little wearing," Nick Pileggi says. "Gay was no longer small enough to fit under that umbrella." Talese says that while part of him, rubbed raw after *Thy Neighbor's Wife*, wanted to use Iacocca as a shield, another part was shoving Iacocca out of the way so that he could write the chronicle of his own life. Then there was his distaste for the business world. The reporter who had found so much to admire in the Mafia and the sex industry was repelled by the businessmen who surrounded Iacocca. Although he had invested months of research, Talese was wavering

on his commitment when he got a phone call from David Halberstam, whom he considered his closest friend. Halberstam said he thought they might have a problem. He hadn't realized Talese was writing about Iacocca until he read about it in the press. Halberstam was planning to write next on the decline of the American automobile industry. He would want to talk to Iacocca himself. Talese was stunned.

Over the next few months, Talese and Halberstam tried to negotiate a compromise that would save their friendship. In truth, the friendship was already sick if not dead; otherwise, neither man could have been amazed to find out what book the other was preparing. Halberstam, recently remarried and a new father, no longer required such a close male friend. Talese, for his part, sensed that Halberstam was drawing back from the noxious mix of lucre and notoriety of *Thy Neighbor's Wife*. A competitiveness that always bubbled dangerously had now risen to the surface. The two men planned to talk in December 1981. That month David's older brother, Michael, was killed in a burglary. The writers' dispute was put on hold until the following March, when Halberstam returned to New York. They had a series of tortured conversations. They have barely spoken to each other since. Talese, who beneath the mannerisms is (in Halberstam's words) "a sweet and generous guy," still mourns. "Sometimes the friendship between two men can be like a love affair," Talese says. "It was that intense. . . . It's probably my fault that we haven't really spoken since, because I know that it can never be the same and I don't want it to be less than what it was."

When Bantam Books suggested to Iacocca that he write his own story with a ghostwriter, Talese took the opportunity to bow out of the project. (Iacocca's book went on to be a record best-seller.) No longer working on a book and feeling more isolated than ever, Gay grew surly and depressed. He was talking about a family history, but he couldn't take the leap. At the end of 1982, Nan announced that she would be traveling on business to London the following May and asked, "Is that convenient?" He never replied. She resolved to go anyway. "Gay was so miserable," she says. "He was trying to destroy everything we had at that time. I knew if I was going to leave, it would force him to move. Sure enough, at the end of April, he said, 'I'm going to Italy.' Gay doesn't like to be left behind. He wants to be the one who leaves." After Nan arrived in London, Gay joined her from Rome for a weekend that was happy enough until a trivial incident caused him to explode. When Nan urged him to be reasonable, he turned to her and said, "You never asked permission." By going to London without clearance and flouting the pretense that Gay set the rules, she had broken an unspoken law of more than twenty years of marriage. "I knew I had to move away from the pressure of his unhappiness," she explains. "That was the beginning of my becoming an independent person."

During his research, which kept him away from home more than ever, Gay formed romantic attachments with a translator and with other women in Rome. "Nan and I have both had relationships with members of the opposite sex that have been enriching and that we will not deny or be embarrassed about," he says. "We have both a life together and a life separate." Nan, while less forthright about her own extramarital involvements, concedes the importance of at least one male friendship in getting her through the rough years when she was viewed as the silent martyr. Although some people who know them well wonder why they have stayed together, this is no show marriage. Each can please and wound the other like nobody else.

At the end of 1986, feeling that he could not make progress on the book unless he found a quiet haven outside New York, Gay asked Nan if she would move with him to Ocean City. It is not her favorite place. They settled instead on Taormina, a seaside town in Sicily, finding in a weekend of house hunting a charming medieval villa. During their three months abroad, Nan would perform her administrative and editorial duties through the mail and a daily three P.M. telephone call to Houghton Mifflin. Taormina was idyllic. Nan picked oranges off the trees and squeezed them for juice. Gay, establishing the schedule he requires, worked in the mornings and evenings and played tennis in the middle of the day. Nan might have realized something was amiss when she caught herself packing a month before their departure. A more worrisome tip-off was a painful right arm that, by the time they left, was close to paralyzed. On the way back to New York, they stopped in Rome and had a delicious dinner. In the middle of it, Nan said, "I just want you to know that I have never been so unhappy in my life."

Gay was lacerated. He had been so absorbed in his work that he had had no idea. Instead of being sorry, he was angry. He felt trapped. Nan's career required him to be in New York, and the hectic life there made him miserable. In the fall of 1987, his hair began to turn white and wiry. He went to see a specialist, who asked, "Did you undergo a trauma about six months ago?"

Nan's rebellion had proceeded as covertly as any of the southern-Italian Resistance movements that Talese had studied. For Gay their stay in Sicily was not only an opportunity to push ahead on the book but also a way to restore the time of their youth, when Nan was so awestruck by her talented husband that she found fulfillment in his shadow. Nan saw it as an attempt to revoke her hard-won independence. "After Taormina I answered back," Nan says. "I felt I had been suffocated. I was in danger of losing my own life." In New York they could not even be civil to each other. She thought he was trying to control her. He thought she was resisting him on everything. "I was afraid of being under his thumb," she says, "and he was shocked that I was unhappy." They went together to see psychiatrist Dr. Peter Neubauer, and recounted their versions of the Taormina sojourn. It was as if they had not been in the same place. Although Gay had begun seeing Neubauer to deal with his own unhappiness before the trip, it was Nan who started going to him now to secure her place outside Gay's vortex. Gay returned to Neubauer the following fall, but concluded he wasn't benefiting from it. When Nan asked the psychiatrist, Neubauer said that Gay was right. "He comes in and tells me about Cavour and the unification of Italy," Neubauer told her. "He's writing his own therapy."

Conscious of a margin that separated him from his friends and his wife, Talese in *Unto the Sons* explored the ethnic heritage that had for as long as he could remember made him feel different, but which, he was discovering, connected him to a great tradition. He now regards his whole life in an Italian light. For instance, he says his decade at *The New York Times* was his happiest period, because the *Times* was a village like Maida, but it was a village that he, like his father and his father's father, felt an irresistible urge to flee. This mode of analysis is seductive, for Talese does seem very Italian. His style of dress would fit in perfectly on the Via Condotti. He believes in *la bella figura*, putting on a good face. He is so fastidious that he brings an extra

shirt to the gym so he can change between the bicycle and the weight machines. Like a pious Italian, he gives money to every beggar whose palm crosses his path. He tips everyone. His delight in children and distaste for dogs, his fondness for large groups ("Nothing makes Gay happier than a table for ten," says Pileggi), his need to know and be known by the maître d', his pursuit of women and his pack of male friends—all of it is right out of southern Italy.

What may be most southern-Italian about Talese is his allegiance to the principle of hard work, his belief that, as Pileggi says, "if you hit the rail two hundred times every day, eventually the railroad gets to Pottstown." The secret of Talese's classic magazine pieces was the way he went back again and again, waiting for the perfect scene, when any other reporter would have declared the job done. His standards have not slackened. With some of the money from the movie sale of *Thy Neighbor's Wife*, he excavated a space he calls "the bunker" beneath his town house. Undistracted by windows or telephones, he uses pens and papers of all colors to storyboard his books like movies. His files brim with reams of superfluous research. When it comes time to write, he weighs each word, consulting a thesaurus to see if another word might work better. There is nothing natural about his writing. He is a craftsman, cutting the sentences, sewing them into paragraphs, and stitching the paragraphs together as his father would tailor a suit. He used to pin the pages of a chapter to one wall and stand back with binoculars to scan the sweep of the narrative. Now Nan, returning home from her workday, reads him his day's work aloud.

One night over dinner I remarked to Talese that many of the modern writers he admires—Shaw, O'Hara, John Cheever—did their best work in short stories but, striving for more, devoted their later careers to novels that fell short. Could it be that Talese too would be remembered more for the early magazine pieces than for these books that have cost him so much effort? He pounced. "My book *The Kingdom and the Power* is the best thing that will ever be written on journalism," he said. "No one comes near it. There's a richness in that book, and in *Thy Neighbor's Wife*. These books teach you things and bring you into different worlds. The Frank Sinatra piece is something that I dashed off with my left hand. I'm not saying I don't think it's good, but you can't compare it to the books. I'm not modest when it comes to my work. I have an arrogance about what is going to last. I think there are sprinters and marathon runners. I'm a marathon runner. A magazine piece is a sprint. The real test is the big book. . . . For eight or ten years you have to be willing to become unknown, not to publish, to quit, to die, and take a chance that you'll be a bust."

Although he no longer writes magazine pieces, Talese still has opinions about them. In late November he accepted an invitation to speak to a journalism class at New York University. In a cream-colored vest, brown herringbone sports jacket, and red tie, he stood ramrod-straight and answered students' questions. When one asked him how sportswriting has changed since the days when he plied the craft, Talese told the story of Norman the forklift driver who didn't make the cut. This, he said, is a story he would like to have written. It ties in to the other sports profiles he has done, pieces that these collegiate novices have studied: of DiMaggio, Joe Louis, and Floyd Patterson, all in the twilight of their careers. "There's a tremendous sadness," Talese said. "It is a cruel market and a cruel business. Sportswriters don't tell you about that."

And then his mind went soaring over the landscape of his own career, and he jumped without warning, as he often does these days, into autobiography. For his subject is no longer the *Times* or the Mafia or sex. It is himself. "I don't want to be cut," he told these students. "I don't want to drop into obscurity. I want to write about something with lasting appeal. So you can't write about today's news. I write about the bittersweet of success, how it isn't what you think it is, about the emptiness in the echo of the cheering. It relates to my own life. I—" Then he stammered, realizing that he couldn't for the life of him recall the question that had set him off. He shook his head. Obsessively, irrepressibly, he was doing with his own life what he had done with the lives of hundreds of people, famous and obscure. He was turning it into a story. □

Kaiser Karl

(Continued from page 121) and Oklahoma City and on the island of Guam. Clearly, Chanel has become the upscale uniform of choice. "I never thought for one second I could bring it that far," Lagerfeld confesses. But he has—in *C*'s. Declares *Women's Wear Daily* publisher John Fairchild, "Karl Lagerfeld is the designer today with the most influence, the only designer who could bring Chanel to such a peak."

The man traffics in trends—if you sneeze you might miss one. Who would have guessed a few years ago that he would be able to get women to run around in Chanel jackets with nothing but leggings on the bottom, or that MTV's "Downtown" Julie Brown would be sent to Paris to review his latest signature Karl Lagerfeld collection, lean, transparent, and tight. ("I dunno, Karl," said Downtown Julie, who was dressed in black velvet short-shorts trimmed in fur, black fishnet stockings, and a strapless black lace bra. "That look was a bit more than I could wear.")

"He's got to destroy Chanel, in a way," observes *International Herald Tribune* fashion editor Suzy Menkes. "Otherwise, he just becomes a caricature of her." Says Lagerfeld, "Only the minute and the future are interesting in fashion—it exists to be destroyed. If everybody did everything with respect, you'd go nowhere."

That's how Lagerfeld answers the critics who say his recent work for Chanel—which borrows liberally from downtown hookers and hustlers as well as from uptown debs on drugs, in tank tops and tulle ballerina skirts—is vulgar. It also anticipates the skeptics who wonder if the high-flying Chanel, which employs legions of lobbyists, lawyers, and detectives to protect it against counterfeiting, isn't moving right up to the undrawn line where one becomes so successful there's a risk of being knocked off and devalued à la Louis Vuitton. Lagerfeld begs to differ. Maybe you are longing for those chic-of-the-week $1,000 Chanel motorcycle boots?—exact replicas, except for the trademark *C*'s, of the $70 variety he appropriated from the look of S&M boys in leather bars fifteen years ago. But in Lagerfeld's head they are already gone, out. When a model started to wrap a plastic chain around her thigh backstage at his recent Chanel show in Paris, he stopped her. "Of human bondage? No, we did that before." He was two collections ahead with—are you ready?—quilted clogs for the enchanted forest. The theme was back-to-nature,

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"but not boring ecology." Lagerfeld had his models carry sheaves of wheat, the symbol of abundance, wrapped in $650 iridescent-bead necklaces that probably cost less than $50 to make. "Here, carry this," he said to one of the most beautiful girls in the world just before she went down the runway. "It means money—that's all they care about anyway."

The next day the *International Herald Tribune* ran a photograph of one of Chanel's simplest new, longer-length suits ($2,260), paired with a basic tank top ($545), bobby socks and two-tone pastel Great Gatsby golf shoes ($660), and *really* pared-down accessories, meaning there were only six pieces of costume jewelry on the model, including the $745 poured-glass earrings and the $1,000 chain belt with dangling *C*'s. To have bought the whole outfit would have cost $9,290. Lagerfeld is convinced it will all sell out. Why? It's not just that Chanel strictly controls the amount of its inventory so that there will always be pent-up demand, but also that Lagerfeld understands the importance of creating fantasy.

"The reason American cars don't sell anymore is that they have forgotten how to design the American Dream," he says. "What does it matter if you buy a car today or six months from now, because cars are not beautiful. That's why the American auto industry is in trouble: no design, no desire." Similarly, "Give me the name of one trendsetting actress. They are all sloppy and they all talk too much. They're all into political causes. Maybe that gives them a nice feeling, but people want dreams too."

"Still, Karl, do you really think women are going to spend $1,500 on a little Chanel terry-cloth jacket?"

"Oh, yes."

"Why?"

"Ah, this is the mystery of fashion."

Tricycles are strewn across the cobbled courtyard on the Rue de l'Université; twenty children, all family of the elderly American-born countess who rents to the designer, leave them lying about. Normality ends there, however, and the private world of Karl unfolds. It begins as soon as the door to his wing of the *hôtel particulier* is opened and the first whiff of powerful potpourri hits—the eighteenth century envelops, a moment of perfection for French civilization, the spirit of which Lagerfeld says is "the only real constant in a life based on change."

Once up the majestic marble staircase, one is surrounded by damask and gilt, tapestries and canopies, priceless *objets* from all three Louis. No wonder Lagerfeld used to powder his ponytail and often still wields a fan. It must be hard to stay out of high heels. Lunch is supposed to be at 1:30, but time in this rarefied atmosphere is only to be used, not observed, and when the door to the study is still *fermée*, the maid never so much as knocks.

Would Mme. de Pompadour or Voltaire feel at home here? Undoubtedly, if they and other Enlightenment-era ghosts wanted a place to haunt, these dark rooms would be ideal. Certainly the twenty imposing paintings hung on the walls of the smallish salon provide endless fascination, particularly the one of Christ just down from the Cross with bare-breasted guardian angels protecting him from Roman soldiers (its original owner was Marie de Médicis, wife of Henri IV). To further tantalize, there is just a glimpse through the open doorway to a blue bedroom with a gilded sleigh bed, once owned by a grand duke, and walls covered in silk-velvet *frappé* made in Lyon according to the records and machinery that still exist from two hundred years ago. Then, suddenly, out of nowhere, blasts the old R&B song "It's in His Kiss."

Lagerfeld's universe is one of luxury and irony, lived at a level of European opulence and breadth no American could possibly muster.

Is he rich?

Very. He was born rich.

Then, is he different from . . . ?

Very.

The iconoclastic philosophe of fashion lives at once frozen in time and at the cutting edge of *moderne;* the software in Karl Lagerfeld's computerlike brain never shuts down. "Style is about defining things, and Karl has to define things all the time," says the writer Joan Juliet Buck, who was close to Lagerfeld in the seventies. "It's like a search-and-destroy mission for stuff, ideas, shapes, colors, correspondence. Karl can outlast anybody in terms of coming up with stuff."

He is also a very wealthy freelancer, collecting hefty salaries from Chanel and Fendi, and sharing in the profits from his own line and from the licensing of his name for several top-selling perfumes. He couldn't care less that KL—which, defying recessionary times, has increased its revenue by 50 percent in the last year to about $20 million—may be sold to the British Dunhill Holdings P.L.C. (The firm also owns Chloé, where Lagerfeld got his start.) Perhaps it's because he's always had money that the pride of ownership holds no interest. "My currency is my work," Lagerfeld says. "I don't want to have an empire; I don't like people dependent on me. I prefer to have a success like this," and he makes an upward, wavelike curve, "not like this," and he slices the air vertically.

Imagine, then, a creator with a keen nose for business whose work spans the globe, yet who disdains the telephone as well as vacations. Imagine that in addition to meeting his sixteen fashion deadlines a year he may at any one time be spending a half-million dollars on a single chair to add to his collection of eighteenth-century furniture—one of the most extensive in the world—or renovating one of his seven meticulously furnished houses and apartments, or designing sets for operas and illustrating children's books, or taking all the photos for the Chanel and Karl Lagerfeld advertising campaigns.

But perhaps Lagerfeld's greatest love is books: the eighteenth-century ideal of the cosmopolitan mind and intellectual control is foremost. His discipline is to awake before dawn to begin his strenuous mental aerobics, the voracious reading of biographies and history, art magazines and newspapers in several languages (as a result, says Buck, Karl Lagerfeld knows all the gossip about all the dead people in the world). Next, he begins his voluminous correspondence, each note and then fax after fax handwritten to a worldwide network—"I have my own secret service." They keep him informed up to the nano-nanosecond.

"Karl is at the center of an extraordinary cobweb. People write to him and tell him things; the world comes to him," says his close friend Princesse Laure de Beauvau Craon. "He prefers to be alone. He likes his own company, which must be very entertaining." The puns and word games flow in four idioms: German, the mother tongue; French, the language of the adopted country; English, picked up as a child because the dialect of northern Germany "was very similar to English"; and Italian, because "to those of us from the North, the Mediterranean represents danger."

And what could be more fun than intrigue? Is there something afoot in the land of one of his residences, a castle here, a château there, dotted across France, Italy, Germany, and Monaco—"Monte Karl's" official residence, to avoid French taxes. More important, has anyone given him up in the last twenty-four hours whose name should be added to the lengthy Banished list? "The key to understanding Karl," says one of his in-

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ner circle, "is that he can bear a grudge."

"He is afraid of one thing in his life: betrayal," says his close friend and "private curator," Patrick Hourcade. "As soon as he discovers people do things behind his back, he closes the curtain." On the other hand, Hourcade says, "he loves to stick it, and he knows how journalists like that, too. The result, in fact, is publicity for everybody." Lagerfeld himself explains: "There are no second options. It's when they think they know better than I do, when they get too big heads, they need a fresh shower, or when they use a private relationship for a business purpose."

The first work shift for Lagerfeld lasts from dawn until lunch (which is always taken at home, and usually alone, in a dining room with a giant television screen). In preparation for the second half of his day, Lagerfeld will spend the morning in a fresh white piqué robe, sketching alone in his study while listening to music that ranges from one of Proust's favorite composers, Reynaldo Hahn, to Japanese Muzak, to the latest top ten—he has been known to drop by a record store and buy three hundred tape cassettes at a time. A lot of his detailed sketches will go right into the garbage can; sometimes two weeks will pass without his delivering anything to his top-notch design teams, who by then are on the verge of despair.

But they have learned to adapt to his late-afternoon, early-evening, even dinnertime arrivals. Meanwhile, his minions will keep busy—Lagerfeld creates a team that will bring him not only the best of craftsmanship but also the New. Several leggy, dark-haired girls are among his muses—twenty-eight-year-old Antoinette Ancelle, an exotic pale-skinned beauty from a tiny village in Burgundy is his current inspiration at Karl Lagerfeld, and she doubles as his button designer, which means she combs the flea markets, constantly looking for specimens and ideas. Ancelle admits that "it's hard to have a private life" with the hours Lagerfeld keeps, "but one adapts to him or makes another life. I don't say much to him, because he knows me very well—you don't have to speak much for him to know you." Still, having seen many come and go during her five years with Lagerfeld, she keeps a certain distance. "To be too close, it's like fire. The fire, it's very pretty, but you get closer and closer and at one moment you get burned up and finished. *Moi,* I warm myself, but I never burn."

Many years ago, Lagerfeld's fortune-teller told him that small, dark-haired women would be important in his life, but that he had to be careful of them, too. Mme. Gabrielle Aghion—small and dark, Egyptian and French, widely believed to have been a model for Lawrence Durrell's Justine—hired him in 1963 to design for Chloé. There he earned fame as a designer in the seventies, and Parfums Lagerfeld was created to license the popular Chloé fragrance. He and Mme. Aghion fell out, he says, when the licensing started bringing him more money. He left Chloé in 1982 for Chanel, lured there by short, dark-haired Kitty D'Alessio, then president of American Chanel. She crossed him, he says, by using an advertising photo that he did not like of (tall) dark-haired Inès de la Fressange, the popular face and model of Chanel in the eighties. D'Alessio, who allegedly plotted against Lagerfeld's top assistant, Gilles Dufour, and took credit for editing many of Lagerfeld's fashion ideas, was also a staunch backer of the talented American designer Frances Stein (average-dark), who still produces many of Chanel's fabulously successful accessories. Lagerfeld, who says Stein "got a big head," routinely bans her creations from the runway, and thanks to him she no longer designs separates for Chanel. By 1986, D'Alessio, who also "got a big head," was out as president.

"The good news," Lagerfeld said at the time, "is that Kitty D'Alessio has been made 'Director of Creative Projects.' The bad news is that there *are* no Creative Projects."

So far, the position of Coco Chanel, her dark bob notwithstanding, remains secure.

L'affaire Inès, however, riveted all of France. The front-page brouhaha that ensued in 1989 after Lagerfeld fired the photogenic beanpole aristocrat, his top model, muse, and closest female friend, did get terrific publicity for them both, a fact not lost on master media manipulator Karl. Inès, who no longer cares to comment, was said to have dared to become involved with another man, and also accepted, without checking with Lagerfeld first, the offer to be the face of Marianne, the national symbol of France. Lagerfeld said at the time that posing for Marianne was unacceptable and *très bourgeois*. Today he claims that the whole thing was made up for the press, that Inès, too, "got a big head," that in fact it was Alain Wertheimer, the tough young owner of Chanel, who decided she should go.

"The last two years she wanted more money. M. Wertheimer saw no reason—she was very well paid and unknown outside of France. Her high days on the runway were over—now the girls are between fifteen and twenty and she was already in her early thirties. She had a bad attitude, eh? One day she embarrassed M. Wertheimer by asking for more money in front of other people. So he told me, 'Invent something to get rid of her.' Marianne was an excuse, a total invention—I couldn't care less."

Lest anyone think he's simple to read, Lagerfeld is also extremely generous with those he cares for. A number of ladies he knows get free dresses, he has made lots of wedding gowns for free, and he says he has even given away sable coats from Fendi. "I throw money out the window. I vaguely know how far I can go, that's all. I like overspending, because you stay more alive—you're ready for the battlefield once again." Of course, there are times when cynicism overwhelms munificence. "Here, take this," he once said, throwing an antique Mme. Grès dress at a point midway between Paloma Picasso and Anna Piaggi, the eccentric Italian he has often sketched, and watching as they lunged for it.

Still, gifts are almost like breathing. At an hour when the rest of Paris has barely had its café au lait, Lagerfeld's discreet manservant, Brahim, will start ordering the lush bouquets and the thoughtful books that will be sent to that day's favored, usually in pairs, for the city house and the country house. "Karl Lagerfeld is the least selfish designer I know," says John Fairchild. Then Brahim will chauffeur certain pieces of the correspondence around town in the big dark-gray Bentley. ("Thank God we still have chauffeurs who can deliver our notes," said Liliane de Rothschild on the day she received her nineteenth bouquet of the year from Lagerfeld—her butler keeps a list.)

Undoubtedly Lagerfeld will also contact his old friend Hourcade, who shares his passion for the eighteenth century, but who is also fast becoming the ice-skating impresario of France. "Actually, Karl is most interested in a very short period at the end of the reign of Louis XV, just before Louis XVI, after the first trip of Mme. de Pompadour's brother, the Marquis de Marigny, to Italy," Hourcade earnestly recounts. The two have spent seventeen years perfecting the garden of Lagerfeld's castle in Brittany, and now that the castle is undergoing renovation,

they have constructed a perfect scale model of forty rooms, complete with precisely labeled furnishings inside.

Lagerfeld has also been drawn back to Germany of late and is renovating a house in his native Hamburg, on the Elbe River not far from the posh Baurs Park area, where he spent his youth. All of his nonfashion profits go to German children's charities, and he is designing, for free, the interiors for a luxury hotel in Berlin. (In exchange he gets an apartment for life, including room service.) Nonetheless, he doesn't harbor much hope for the renewed nation. "Germany cannot be what she used to be, because there are not enough Jewish people. My mother always said there was some sparkle only the Jewish culture could bring. Germany without Jews is a boring, materialistic country."

Of all his residences it is the one in Brittany that has captured his soul. Lagerfeld's mother is buried in the private chapel there, as is Jacques de Bascher, his flamboyant, aristocratic, and closest friend for nearly twenty years. De Bascher died of AIDS in 1989, at thirty-seven, and his death has left a gaping hole in Lagerfeld's life—he still cannot speak of Jacques without bursting into tears. In the wake of his death, Lagerfeld, who says he has never been decadent—"I'm not one who can get lost"—rarely even socializes; these days he stays home and reads and watches videos far into the night. He has also completely changed the way he dresses, exchanging his lifelong uniform of perfectly tailored Parisian suits, shirts, and ties, no matter the season, for looser black mourninglike garb of Japanese design.

Jacques de Bascher was an infamous character who looked like a thirties movie star, dressed like a nineteenth-century dandy, and was kept by Lagerfeld, whom he called Mein Kaiser, though the two never lived together and, according to Lagerfeld, were never sexually intimate. He says it was "*amour absolu,* detached from all the problems—money, family, physical relationship—that can ruin a relationship."

Once, when Lagerfeld gave an eighteenth-century ball, Jacques came as the Rialto Bridge. Another time Jacques was officially engaged by a cardinal to the equally wild Diane de Beauvau Craon (whose grandmother was an Italian princess), at a medieval Vatican ceremony still accorded certain members of Italian nobility. Lagerfeld gave her a full-length black ermine cape from Fendi for the occasion and assumed he would take care of the "eight kids they announced they would have," but Jacques and Diane lost interest after the visit to the Vatican was over. Jacques would brag about his weird aristocratic ancestors (among them Gilles de Rais, a companion-in-arms of Joan of Arc known for torturing little boys and girls). He would throw wild parties where drugs abounded, and would drift easily back and forth between the Lagerfeld and Saint Laurent camps. Many found him utterly charming, others unsavory and creepy.

"He was the wildest person in the West," says Lagerfeld, "but this was like a double life—a kind of Mr. Hyde and Dr. Jekyll, and I had nothing to do with that. If I had had the same kind of life I wouldn't be here anymore, because he died from that."

"He has all the qualities of the virgin," says Gilles Dufour, the studio director of Chanel and Lagerfeld's collaborator for twenty-five years. "He has great discipline. He does not need people around to be happy—he's very much into his dreams, his fantasies, and his books."

"Karl has always been about being above human emotion, human frailty, the chatter and passions that consume us," Joan Buck adds. "He could look at Jacques's excesses from above, in a princely fashion—he himself was too grand."

When asked if he considers himself happy, Lagerfeld responds, "Happiness, in my sense, doesn't say anything, you know. The only person I really cared for died, so—*poof*—I don't care." Suddenly Lagerfeld emits an involuntary sob, but goes on waving his hands as if to drive the grief away. "But it also gives you a kind of freedom—now I'm ready for everything because I've got nothing." Lagerfeld's face, which usually radiates mischief and energy, is a terrified mask of tears and pain.

"I'm not a family-minded person, and he was the only thing that gave a kind of sense to things. . . . But the strange thing is, it wasn't physical—it had nothing to do with that. I hate the atmosphere of boys—I never went to a gay club in my life, nearly. . . . No, it was like family without the burden of family, and he brought to my life a kind of sparkle nobody else ever will. Maybe there is one person in life for you and that's all."

Lagerfeld mentions the chapel where both Jacques and his mother are buried, and says he will never join them there. Dust to dust? "Dust to dust." He chokes. "I like the idea of starting from nothing and going to nothing. What I leave behind I don't care—paradise now. . . . Finally, the purpose of life is life."

"I was born to be alone." Lagerfeld says a fortune-teller first told him that when he was only eighteen, but he knew it already. As a child he preferred to sketch than "to play with the peasants." He wouldn't need anybody else, the fortune-teller prophesied. " 'There are things you can have and things you cannot have. One cannot have everything, and nobody can adjust as well to that as you.' She told me, 'You can never have a normal family life, so whatever the standard image is of happiness, family, friendship, *bonheur,* for you it doesn't work. Stay alone, watch the world—you can get everything if you are ready not to conform. Stay away from everything that is normal life.' Strange, eh?"

Of course, there was nothing terribly normal to begin with. Lagerfeld was actually born "Lagerfelt" in Hamburg, in 1938, when his German mother was forty-two and his Swedish father was over sixty. "I was treated like a grandchild in a way." His parents were rich, cerebral, and cultivated. His mother had been married in a Vionnet gown, and he was told she was the first woman in Europe to get an aviator's license, though he never saw her fly. She mostly smoked and read and played the violin three hours every morning—until one day she stopped forever. At dinner his parents would discuss in French things not meant for small ears, but their favorite sport was arguing about the history of religion—both his parents were Catholic, a decidedly minority religion in northern Germany, and both had fallen away. "When my father became very old he resented that, because she pushed him out of the church," Lagerfeld says. "He thought he would never die, because his parents had lived to be nearly a hundred and it was his dream to survive my mother. He hated the idea of her living happily, spending his money without him—he couldn't stand that idea."

The money came from controlling 57 percent of the condensed-milk market in Europe—Lagerfeld's father had gotten the concession from Carnation after World War I. The Germans wouldn't buy cans with an American label on them, so he changed the name to Glücksklee, or Cloverleaf, and that bought a 1,200-acre country estate, Bissenmoor, where little Karl and his "much older" half-sister from his father's first marriage (his first

wife had died) were sheltered from the war. Lagerfeld no longer speaks to his sister: "She did not behave well after my father's death in 1967, and I never saw her again."

As a war baby Lagerfeld was much more than privileged. "We went through the worst period of the war without knowing it—this was something my parents achieved which was unbelievable," he recalls. It didn't seem odd that there were fifty-six refugees sharing the house with the family. The Frenchwoman who became Karl's French tutor when he was five was only one of many who tended him. He grew up hearing the story that at four he demanded a valet to dress him and at a Christmas dinner a few years later he screamed and would not stop, because his parents had bought him a copy of the wrong eighteenth-century portrait. (He got the one he wanted, of Frederick the Great at a court dinner, and it still hangs over his bed at Le Mée, his house on the outskirts of Paris.) When he wanted his mother to read him children's stories, she told him he would have to learn to read himself, and he did. When he entered the nearby country school he shot ahead two grades.

"I was spoiled, I hated the idea of being a child," says Lagerfeld, who can't really remember any childhood friends. "They all had slave parts. I had no need for company—I had the feeling the world was mine and nobody could say anything." What young Karl really loved to do was sketch. "I was born with a pencil in my hand and I can't remember ever wanting to do something other than what I do today." Sometimes he would sneak up into the attic to pore over old *Vogue*s and sniff around the huge trunks belonging to his father's first wife. "I was interested in what people used to wear—I loved to look at old photos. I had the feeling I was born too late—the twenties and the thirties were better times."

At first he thought he would like to paint portraits, but that idea was quashed by Mater. "My mother said this was ridiculous, but 'if you want to learn to paint, you will learn to paint. You are totally ungifted for music.' " He also credits his mother for his rapid-fire speech. "She told me, 'I can't bear to hear your ridiculous stories; finish them before I get to the door.' " It was also thanks to her that he never smoked. " 'When you smoke you often see the hands and as yours are not very beautiful...' Well, you can imagine what this did to a fourteen-year-old boy. I never touched another cigarette." His mother was, of course, "bored to death" in the country, and she remained bored when they later moved to Hamburg, which was nothing compared with Berlin, where she had lived before marrying.

Perhaps Lagerfeld's boredom phobia can be traced to these early days. Yet, in recounting these tales he seems unaware of how demanding his mother sounds to his listener. "Maybe she was severe, but things were done in a very light way, eh? I wanted to please her because she hated everything second-rate." Certainly, she didn't suffer fools gladly. Many years later, after her son had become a famous designer and she was living in the castle in Brittany he has since inherited from her, a television-commercial producer demanded to know why there was a little wooden plank overhanging the small pond in front of the house. Lagerfeld's mother, who by this time had striking white hair and dressed in long skirts over slacks, with delicate blouses and a monocle hanging around her neck, threw open the downstairs windows and proclaimed, "It is there in case the goldfish want to get out and take a walk in the garden." She then slammed the windows shut.

Karl was fourteen when he announced he wanted to leave Hamburg, a port city on the Elbe River near the North Sea, which billed itself as "the door to the world," to go to Paris and become a designer. "You are not snobbish, my son," his mother commented dryly, "for you want to be a *fournisseur* [supplier]." "I was allowed to try whatever I wanted, but I had to prove I was serious about it—there was no freaking out." Arriving in Paris and never having liked the shape of the *l* and the *t* together at the end of his name, Karl created "Lagerfeld" at customs and that was that. Less than two years later he won a prize from the International Wool Secretariat for designing a coat. Yves Saint Laurent, seventeen, won the dress prize, and the two have been competing ever since. "You have to understand that, to the French, Yves Saint Laurent is a god," says fashion journalist Christa Worthington, "but Karl Lagerfeld is a German."

The youthful Karl, so well bred, was horrified by the tawdriness of the *fournisseur*'s existence in those days. Balmain hired him and made his coat, but life in the haute couture was not as he had imagined. "I thought the people were quite cheap, the intellectual level very low," says Lagerfeld, who by then was deeply interested in history, literature, and languages. "The minute you left the gilded salons it was the worst—mean, vulgar, filthy. People were treated like dirt. But I wanted to stay in Paris and so I said, Shut up, don't think about anything, because you are here in Paris to learn."

Learn he did, and in the process became a kind of high-style hit man, taking aim at both ends of the market, designing shoes, fabrics, furs, china, pencils. It always started with a sketch and Lagerfeld always worked freelance; worrying about the bottom line would inhibit creativity and encroach on his freedom. In 1963 he was one of four hired by Mme. Aghion and her financial partner, Jacques Lenoir, to design a pioneering line of luxury ready-to-wear for Chloé.

The four designers competed furiously until there were three and then only two, Lagerfeld and Graziella Fontana, who worked side by side for seven years until Lagerfeld, having mastered Fontana's technique of tailoring, triumphed in 1972 in a kind of lace leukemia. "Karl could do Graziella, but Graziella could not do Karl," M. Lenoir once explained to *Women's Wear*, diagnosing it as a case of "the white corpuscles eating the red."

"I am not a Woodstock person," Lagerfeld says in utter seriousness. "For one thing, in the sixties I hated the smell." So when Saint Laurent as a full-blown couturier was taking the Mao jacket from the barricades of '68 and turning it into the height of chic, all the while becoming French society's darling, Lagerfeld was at the center of a younger, more outré group. The designers were still good friends then—they went shopping for Art Deco together, and both knew Andy Warhol—but it was Lagerfeld who played the role of the bored German aristocrat in *L'Amour*, Warhol and Paul Morrissey's version of *How to Marry a Millionaire*, with Donna Jordan and Jane Forth. As the rival camps began to assert themselves in the mid-seventies, Karl was always considered the fun one, looser and more accessible. And there was no majordomo playing gatekeeper, as Bergé did for Saint Laurent.

It was Lagerfeld, in a semi-private show for one of his shoe lines, who sent the black model Pat Cleveland down the runway in nothing but his shoes and a pink feather in her pubic hair. And Lagerfeld who encouraged his older Italian muse, Anna Piaggi—whom he sketched again and again in male and female costumes from all periods of history—in her sartorial excesses, which featured baskets of dead fish on her head and feathery pigeon carcasses at her waist. But he could also be cruel. Another of his models was an unattractive Beatnik artist,

the late Shirley Goldfarb; Lagerfeld had her on the runway, it seems, just to make fun of her. Then she did something to displease him and he said, "Ugly is one thing, stupid is another, but ugly and stupid is too much." She was sent away. "All monsters of creation are monsters in other ways," observes Marian McEvoy.

Lagerfeld was an encyclopedia of retro who reworked fantasies of the past for Chloé—a postmodernist before the term was coined. He haunted the flea markets for antique designer clothes and fabrics; he pored over old magazines and photos and learned the histories of hundreds of Art Deco brooches. He collected old Vionnet, Poiret, and Mme. Grès dresses (never Chanel), and made over the twenties and thirties or the eighteenth century—whatever, it was all referential. When Chanel beckoned, Lagerfeld had already grasped the fantasy and possessed the background and research to understand how to remake "Mademoiselle."

The timing was perfect. "The growing yuppie movement needed status symbols," says Allan Mottus, who publishes a newsletter on the beauty-and-cosmetics business. "There weren't a lot around and Chanel was one of the great ones."

Following Chanel's trunk show at Bergdorf Goodman last September, the store did a million dollars' worth of Chanel business in three days. On the West Coast the story is the same: "L.A. is gaga for Chanel," says Mary Rourke, fashion editor of the *Los Angeles Times*. "Remember," says Bergdorf's new C.E.O., Burton Tansky, "the center of the business is not biker boots and leather jackets—it's very, very beautiful suits, dresses, and jackets used various ways." Says the *Herald Tribune*'s Menkes, "In my view the American woman longs for a uniform. You don't see so much Chanel on the streets in Europe. You do in Hong Kong, which is another aspirational society." Mottus estimates that the privately held and secretive Chanel empire does more than $300 million in fragrance and cosmetics retail sales worldwide and another $100 million in accessories. Haute couture, by contrast, is a loss leader these days; even Arie Kopelman, current president of American Chanel, says the importance of the "halo effect"—where the fashion lines ring up sales for the far more profitable cosmetics and accessories—is "overblown."

Thus, in its zeal to get the best space and location for its boutiques and to tightly control presentation and supply, the company has a reputation for being a very tough negotiator. Lagerfeld's renowned ability to perform for the press is another, inestimable advantage. Explaining the Chanel marketing strategy, Kopelman puts "the support of the press" second only to "the clothes on the hanger." "I've found over the years that Karl's very easy to deal with," says Fairchild Publications president Michael Coady. "He understands the role we play, at least, and he rides the ups and downs—he's always been less emotional about coverage than most." Is there a moment when Karl Lagerfeld, who once hosted a live TV talk show in Germany, is at a loss for words? Never. "He's good for the whole business, because excitement swirls around him," says Bergdorf's Tansky. "He loves to create controversy and he's catty."

It was quite a show in Lagerfeld's Rue Cambon studio the day before his Chanel spring collection debuted, with supermodels Linda Evangelista, Claudia Schiffer, Naomi Campbell, and Christy Turlington there for their final fittings. At the last minute, hemlines were being ripped out and pulled downward. Evangelista, with flame-red hair, was being coached to pose like a legendary Chanel model of the fifties, Marie Hélène Arnaud, whose face was on the cover of a 1954 Spanish magazine Lagerfeld was brandishing while standing at his desk and eating a lunch of three grilled hot dogs.

On his desk were seventeen trays of bangles and beads, and about twenty-five friends and staff members were gathered to watch or help with decking out the models for the next day's show. Tacked onto the bulletin board were 175 numbered sketches, "the passage." American *Vogue* was already there when, in the early evening, a troika from *The New York Times* walked in; the ranking member perched on a chair at Lagerfeld's elbow. Within minutes the fashion mavens were being proffered pricey baubles as well as drawings by Christian Bérard, a thirties set designer and contemporary of Coco Chanel's, which Lagerfeld had just purchased at auction. Why not two? Why not four? But of course. And here, have the latest choker, and this $1,300 necklace. All the booty was oohed and aahed over, and promptly disappeared into a large black tote. The ringleader later told me that some of Lagerfeld's largess was returned but some of the expensive loot was kept, as is the frequent custom in the fashion press. The posters, she explained, "were like a Christmas present from a friend," and a pair of glass-bead earrings ($745) were a must: "God forbid you don't have them on next time."

Evangelista was now in front of the mirror with the zipper in back undone so that her skirt could be pulled down longer. "You know, they have no hips, but they have buns," Lagerfeld told the fashion editor. "They don't need a bathing suit, just a double bra." Lagerfeld's words gave him inspiration; out came his pencil box, and in less than five minutes he had produced and given the *Times* editor a more personal souvenir—a signed sketch of "the double-bra bathing suit." As the *Times* delegation trooped out, air kisses all around, Lagerfeld whispered, "I hope you like my show tomorrow." "Oh, I will," the editor promised.

Backstage the following morning Lagerfeld was full of fun but slightly nervous. He shooed away the paparazzi, who hoped to watch the models undress. "I don't want any girls photographed while changing—*non, non,* we're not running a porn shop." He eyed the sleek, black, six-foot-seven-inch, and exquisitely tasteful André Leon Talley from *Vogue,* who was wearing a suit of banana-yellow-and-teal plaid lined in baby-blue satin. "I know you're not interested, but the others are here for pussy."

A few minutes later he asked Talley, "It's fresh enough? No doubts?"

"No doubts," Talley, an old friend, answered.

Many in the audience, as it turned out, felt that the spring show did not pack the punch of Lagerfeld's previous fall collection—but not his fashion-editor friends, who assured him it was divine. Thank God. For yet another season he had dodged the *B*-word.

But there would be no rest for Kaiser Karl. With few exceptions, the New York spring shows that followed in November were dreadful, which only meant that all those desperate tastemakers would again be craning their Chanel-roped necks in Lagerfeld's direction in February, at the next show. In a frenzy of expectation, they would look to him for novelty and spirit, and, as usual, he would probably deliver. What can the chic set drowning in *C*'s expect? My guess: quilted condom holders for the newest Chanel handbags. □

Mick's Moves

(Continued from page 106) good company, Mick Jagger, quick and funny and, above all, Lite.

But what, one wonders, is he passionate about? What engages him, turns him on, gets him off? Jagger hates to get caught being serious about anything, but under pressure he'll admit to a certain ardency about his work. "I mean, look, it means a lot to me, playing and singing," he mumbles rather sheepishly. "And I take songwriting seriously. People don't generally want to talk about it seriously. People ask you one-liner questions and you give them one-liner answers. 'How do you feel about songwriting?' 'Oh, well, it's just something I do very quickly.' But you do have to take it seriously, because it's very long-lived. And it's the basis for the performance. You can perform a bad song well, but it's better if it's good, and then it's something you can return to and perform again. It's good to write a lot. I don't have a lot of time for people who sort of wait three or four years. Because you get waiting for the great thing they're going to put out and then it's not as good, because the expectation level is so much higher. It's better just to do stuff. It's like taking pictures. You take a lot of snaps of your kids and you might find one that just happened to hit the light."

Jagger has no particular working routine, nor, indeed, any routine at all. "I just write all the time," he says. "And you have to sing every day, too, so you can build up to being, you know, Amazingly Brilliant at the end. If you don't do it every day, then you lose it—you lose the ability to sing *hard* for very long. I did three songs today, just practicing. I threw everyone out of the studio. I do that sometimes, especially when I don't know what I'm doing, so I can make a fool of myself more privately. Then when I know what I'm doing, I can make a fool of myself in front of everyone. I don't mind."

When Jagger composes—with or without his Stones co-writer, Keith Richards—he'll often enlist the help of other musicians, including Matt Clifford, his new keyboard player, and the guitarist Jimmy Rip. "The process never seems to happen the same way twice," says Rip. "It's really funny to watch when it happens to him because the song just seems to fall out of the sky onto his head. But it usually starts with a beat on the drum machine or something. He wrote with [Rolling Stones drummer] Charlie Watts for years like that. Charlie would just bash away, and Mick would say, 'Play a shot there,' and by the time the beat starts happening, Mick is yelling and banging on some chord and all of a sudden it's there. Sometimes he's singing words, sometimes just one word."

"You know that he's got something when he starts dancing around," says Clifford. "He can't really do it sitting in an armchair. Maybe he's dancing with a guitar, or with maracas or something. If he gets up and starts dancing, then you know it's beginning, and you're onto something good."

"Or sometimes it won't be good, and he'll get up to start dancing to *make* it good," Rip adds. "You know, those funny little dances you've been seeing since 1964 on *Ed Sullivan*. You just watch him dance and the song will come."

Of course, the dances were more tentative in 1964, in the days of Ed Sullivan, but they were always essential to the Rolling Stones' appeal—and, arguably, essential to a great deal of what happened to pop culture in the decades that followed. Before Mick Jagger, sexual iconography had reached a point that was both apotheosis and dead end. In Marilyn Monroe's remarkable array of erotic gestures, female sexual expression went nearly as far as it could go. And on the male side, there was Elvis Presley, the ultimate portrayal of a certain kind of male sexuality: an expressionless face (except for the insolent, curling lip) on top, and a steadily pumping pelvis underneath.

Then along came Jagger.

Where Elvis was all tensile stillness and Monroe was severely stylized, Jagger was simply haywire; he kept expressing even when there was nothing to express, even when the hundreds of faces he made referred only to themselves. Where Elvis was supremely male and Monroe supremely female, Jagger was both at once, and heterosexual men found themselves as disturbingly drawn to his knock-kneed bumps and grinds as women did. Perhaps the enormous re-evaluation of sex and sexuality that dominated the sixties and seventies—the long hair, the unisex fashions, the so-called sexual revolution—would have taken place without him, but Mick Jagger's charged androgyny now looks at the very least hugely influential, and probably even catalytic.

And that's not all. Unlike the sex symbols of the fifties, Jagger was remote—all chilly irony and alienation. Before he and Keith Richards began writing their own impertinent rockers, the Stones performed black American rhythm-and-blues songs—but Jagger turned them on their heads. He couldn't sound as though he'd suffered down on the bayou; he couldn't sound poor and booze-ridden and doomed. And he knew it. So instead of faking it, he celebrated the incongruity; he reveled in being pampered and young and able to get away with anything. Jagger turned the seething black blues into a white boy's self-celebration. His crazy little frug defied symbolism, conventional sexuality, and every other definition. It was elusiveness distilled. And the songs stated what the dance meant. They said, "You can't catch me." They said, "I'm free to do what I want, any old time." They said, "Hey, you, get offa my cloud!"

Jagger's little butterfly dance still conveys much the same thing, and by now it's seeped into every aspect of his life. To be Mick Jagger is to preserve above all else the ability to boogie out of reach, to avoid any subject and any definition, to hover around a persona without getting trapped in it. Put your finger on him and you touch dust.

He spends a great deal of time and energy on image control, on making sure he's not typecast in this role or that. Friends who blab about him to the press are sharply reprimanded; employees are asked to sign confidentiality clauses. Even his marriage is shrouded in ambiguity. For years, Jerry Hall had been plaintively and rather publicly trying to pin Jagger down, forgiving his many infidelities and even flaunting a few of her own to make him jealous. "Jerry wanted to marry Mick so badly," says one old friend, "that she used to travel everywhere with an orange blossom and a plastic ring in her suitcase." Finally, on November 21, 1990, she and Jagger tied the knot in a Balinese Hindu ceremony of somewhat dubious validity. Despite the couple's willingness to undergo all the requisite hoopla (at the climax the husband is supposed to beat his wife with a banana), the wedding was later repudiated by the local Hindu leader, who was not entirely convinced of the Jaggers' religious devotion. Now, when I ask him whether he is legally married, Jagger says, "Depends what you call. . . I *think* so." And then an enormous pause. "What's the next question?"

Jagger's slipperiness is maddening, but it also strikes me as an honorable and sometimes even heroic way to handle the consequences of a stardom so universal that friends say he can't walk down a village street in Bhutan or Brazil without getting recognized. Being Mick Jagger gives you a choice: you can be a hermit,

or you can devour as much of the world as your renown makes available. Jagger chooses the latter path, gulping down the cultural life of every city he tours, taking in the museums, meeting local artists, musicians, even politicians, and then drinking in the nightlife at whatever club represents the cutting edge. Instead of sealing himself within an entourage or a secure inner circle, Jagger exults in mixing friends and straddling contrary worlds. "The classic case to me was the first weekend I met Mick," says Matt Clifford. "I went down to Barbados to see how we would get on working together, and the next day I found myself flying to Mustique and having lunch on the beach with Princess Margaret. Being with Mick is going in the deep end, headfirst. He can get on with anybody on any level. And he's an expert at making you feel at ease—just the opposite of the standard rock star."

Yet rock star he is—even when it looks most incongruous. "We were auditioning band members in New York six months ago," recalls Jimmy Rip, "and Mick was trying to get furniture and stuff for his new house. And in the middle of the rehearsal hall, we were jamming loud rock 'n' roll, and in come these three people with about fifteen paintings from Christie's or Sotheby's. And they're leaning the paintings up against the wall, and Mick starts singing 'Sex Machine,' by James Brown, and dancing around and pointing at the ones he wants. I guess you could call him cross-cultural."

Suddenly Jagger's eyes are bugging out of his head, and mine follow suit as three blond apparitions float into the dank yellow room: Jerry Hall, hugely tall and hugely pregnant, and Elizabeth and James, hugely beautiful at ages seven and six, respectively. "Daddy," says James, "do you want to see a cookie that's meant to be a hedgehog?" He brandishes a grayish object that resembles nothing so much as a hockey puck. "Very good," says Mick, his voice all fatherly and bright. "You did it this afternoon?"

"I'm sorry I didn't call," says Jerry in her strange Dallas-goes-to-Mayfair accent. She's wearing pants and a gold cable-knit sweater, with socks to match, and makeup worthy of a Rainbow Room soirée. "They just wanted to come kiss you good night," she tells Mick.

"But it's only six o'clock," says Jagger.

"They might have missed you."

"They might have done," Jagger sighs. And then, to James, "You can't eat that cookie now. It's not meant to be eaten. You've got to look at it for a while."

Jerry tosses me an apologetic glance. "Y'all want tea?" she drawls, before disappearing in the direction of the studio's kitchen. Watching her now, I remember what a friend of hers told me: "Jerry's perfect for Mick," he said. "You know, when he was married to Bianca [first wife Bianca Perez Morena de Macias, whom he divorced in 1980], she never made a real home for him, because Bianca's basically a gypsy. She likes to live in hotels, and her room is always a mess. Francesco Clemente gives her drawings and you find them on the floor with all the expensive clothes designers give her. But Jerry—I went to see her once when she was modeling, working hard, and she and Mick were about to go spend a weekend in France. And on the bed she had, perfectly folded, all his shirts, three pairs of pants, underwear, socks. 'I have everything ready,' she said, 'so he can just point to what he wants and then I throw it in the suitcase.' I mean, Jerry was a wild girl, but she's a natural homemaker. She's a geisha. And she has a good heart."

By now, Mick Jagger is leaping adroitly about the room, helping Elizabeth play Ping-Pong, teaching James how to hold a billiard cue. The satanic majesty of the stage, the inflamer of youth, the ophidian sex symbol, drug fiend, rock god—all have given way to the most ordinary English papa, chasing his golden babies and admonishing, "You're supposed to hold the other end of the paddle, Lizzie." Or "Don't talk silly, Jimmy, please."

Has he really changed so much? Yes and no. Even during the years of acid trips and coke orgies, Jagger was never as wild as the rockers around him. As one old friend puts it, "He was a control freak then, and he's a control freak now, and you can't take a lot of drugs and be in control." Still, erotic liaisons aside (he's recently shown an interest in the fashion model Carla Bruni, who has also tantalized Eric Clapton and, if you believe the gossip columns, Donald Trump), no one can doubt he's cleaned up his act—as have all the Rolling Stones, at least while they're on tour. "After the show there would be a pattern," says Matt Clifford. "We'd all rush into our vans and limos and go back to the hotel. Mick would go to his room, and then sometimes he and I would go out to dinner or a nightclub or watch a movie. Keith and Ronnie [Wood] would go to Keith's room and start a nightlong session, with friends and smoking and drinking, a general party and very loud music, and they would often be joined by the horn players—real rock 'n' roll. Bill Wyman used to go work on his computer and his autobiography, all by himself, till like three or four in the morning. And Charlie [Watts] would disappear into his room and sketch his bed or something. He has this book where he's made a sketch of every bed in every hotel room.

"You have to realize that Mick has a very driven nature. On tour he had a choreographer for the dancing and he also had a personal trainer, and he was training to the level of an Olympic athlete. On the road, he doesn't drink at all. If we had three days off, maybe he would have a glass of wine, but that's all—I'm not exaggerating. And then, before going onstage, I would go to his room and we would do vocal exercises, warming the voice, scales up and down, la la la. His discipline is incredible. He's very strict with himself."

There are those who say he's strict with his children too, but according to Jagger, "that's a lot of crap. It depends what your marker is. I don't think I'm strict, but you know if they get really out of line you owe it to them to try and pull them back a bit. But it doesn't happen very often." Jagger has two older children, twenty-one-year-old Karis, who is the daughter of the actress Marsha Hunt (and whom Jagger refused to acknowledge as his until she was nearly three), and Bianca's twenty-year-old daughter, Jade, who was once kicked out of her expensive British boarding school for sneaking off to meet a boyfriend. "But that was so minor," fumes Jagger, "so pathetically minor. I mean, Jade and I were laughing about it, but the English press love to make it into this whole deal of how strict I was. I wasn't strict, it was the school. I just told her that she was an idiot, and that the school was just as bad; they were both badly behaved. Actually, I was probably not strict enough.

"When my older daughters were younger, you know, people used to ask me if I was really worried about sex and drugs and this, that, and the other. But my children were nowhere near as rebellious as I was, or as rude. The thing you learn about children is that they are people in their own right, and you can't really do an awful lot with them. You can't change them. And when they rebel, you have to put yourself in their position. Parents I know ask me, 'What shall I do with so-and-so?' and I say, 'I remember what *you* were like. You were a complete drunk and out of your mind. So what are you so worried about?' Children have to go through a period of going crazy.

I mean, of course, you don't want it to end in *death*." He bursts into giggles. "That's kind of the limit, death. You don't want it to go *that* far."

One might almost venture to say that family life has changed Jagger, has tamed and domesticated him. But now he senses his proximity to the pigeonhole, and he starts to dance. "I'm not that domesticated," he protests. "After life on the road, I'm not very good at being in the house and doing things. I'm extremely restless—I'm extremely restless and I never really stop working. I'm always writing, and if I'm not working with the Rolling Stones or something, I can do this solo album, or I can do some movie, or I'll make some deal, or I'll just go off somewhere and have a good time. I love all my children—I'm not saying that I don't—and we all get on very well. But I think it's a mistake to paint a picture of me as a sort of domesticated, ordinary kind of homebody, because I don't think it's really true." A pause, and then a tiny grimace. "Probably I don't like the image of it very much."

But surely having young children has calmed him down a little. Hasn't it? "I don't let my children run my life," he argues. "I see lots of people that do. I try to have a sort of middle course on that, so that you spend time with your children, but you don't spend the *whole* of your time, because you've got to get on with your own life. Last year I took the children out of school for two terms so they wouldn't routinize me. And they seemed to have a good time. They were still taught school every day. But I thought it was just a drag being tied to their school and their school holidays at this age. It depends what you think. You can either leave them in school but never see them and go have a great time, or you can stay and be a slave to their sort of nine-to-five banking hours. Which I don't particularly want to do. I don't want them to dominate me, nor do I want to make their lives miserable and be selfish. I mean, if I felt that they were *suffering* from me doing something as *rash* as taking them out of school, in February, in England, which I can't even tell you what it's like—it rains all the time, and it's, like, the most depressing place on earth—and taking them to the Caribbean or something, where they're taught by a very nice lady. . . I think it's much healthier for them. And much better for me."

He glances over at the children, who are now playing happily under Jerry's serene gaze, scrawling pictures on a plastic drawing board installed in the studio specifically for the progeny of newly housebroken hellions like Jagger. He takes a reading of my face, which undoubtedly betrays more surprise than I know—I hadn't exactly expected him to spit brimstone and smoke opium before my eyes, but I hadn't quite expected Captain and Mrs. Kangaroo, either. He flashes his enormous grin.

"I think people find it very hard to accept multifaceted people," he says. "That you can be a person who has children but yet you can go out and get wild and crazy and mad and drunk, and then you can go out on the road and be completely sober because that's what you have to be. And so on and so on. I don't find life quite so simple, that everyone's just got these tiny personalities and that they can only behave in one kind of way." He wrinkles his nose. "For instance, if you speak to Jacob Rothschild, you're a part of the gentry. And then if you get drunk you're an alcoholic, and if you don't drink you've completely changed. People find it very hard to accept that you can be all these things at almost the same time."

He has just stumbled into a curious question. There's no denying that in recent years his appearances among the very aristocracy his songs used to satirize have excited more comment than the songs themselves. "He's now absolutely part of the Establishment," says Alvilde Lees-Milne, the blue-blooded horticulturist who designs Jagger's gardens. "He's a considerable social figure." Jagger and Hall keep splendid homes in New York, the Loire Valley, Mustique, and the wilds of Texas, and they have recently purchased a grand Georgian manse in the London suburb of Richmond, near the estate of the Stones' financial manager, Prince Rupert Loewenstein. Loewenstein, a pear-shaped patrician who reportedly refers to the rock world as "those ghastly, ghastly people," seems to have done wonders for his favorite's social standing—not to mention the Jagger pocketbook (estimated at more than $50 million).

Yet Loewenstein didn't enter the Rolling Stones' life until 1970, and Jagger's social ascent started long before that. On the day he was born, in fact: July 26, 1943, in Dartford, Kent, fifteen miles southeast of London. His father was a physical-education instructor, though rather more respectable than most: he taught other phys-ed teachers, and even consulted for a TV program called *Seeing Sport*, which frequently employed the services of young Mick (then called Mike) to demonstrate the fine points of athletics or camping. Mike's mother, Eva, has been described as fastidious and house-proud. "She thought she married beneath her, and she wanted something better," says one old friend. "She was the class-conscious one—and the more vocal personality. The upwardly mobile side comes from her."

Jagger claims to remember very little about his past, but he does recall the stifling dullness of Dartford. "My great thing against suburban life was that it was, first of all, petty," he says, "and secondly, indirect, boring, based on consumer values, at best unambitious, and full of tittle-tattle and jealousies and things like that." Just as blues-based rock 'n' roll provided a way out of the Liverpudlian working class for the Beatles, so it also became a way out of the suffocating ordinariness of middle-class suburbia for Mick Jagger. "I was trying to look for a music that wasn't a reflection of that society. But the rock 'n' roll that was being played in the working class in England was this sort of teddy-boys thing, incredibly derivative of a music that wasn't very interesting to start with—of fifties rock. It was a very antiquated, watered-down style, and all the bands playing it were full of mediocre, boring people, and it was all in terrible ballrooms for people who used to go and fight, and dreadful girls—it was just not right. And so people like me, and people who went to art school and things, thought themselves a cut above that. It was just snobbery, if you want."

It soon became mass snobbery. Many of the fans who flocked around Jagger and the Stones during the sixties turned out to be the loose-cannon scions of England's most illustrious families—the Guinnesses, the Ormsby-Gores, the Tennants, the Lambtons—and Jagger has built on those friendships over the decades. His notably refined taste in such luxuries as paintings and furniture and wine and gardens is generally attributed to his long-standing camaraderie with people like Lees-Milne, the designer David Mlinaric, and, especially, the formidable antiques dealer and tastemaker Christopher Gibbs—not to mention the salutary influence of his sixties girlfriend Marianne Faithfull, who, before she became a folk-rock icon and then a walking cautionary tale, was the daughter of the Baroness Eva Sacher-Masoch. But Jagger also seems to have developed his own discriminating taste at a very early age. Friends report that he was buying Regency furniture on London's King's Road when he was still in his early twenties.

"I've known him for twenty years," says his friend Desmond Guinness, "since

he came to the house with Christopher Gibbs and Marianne Faithfull. He was a free spirit then, and I think he still is. But in those days he was a little spaced out, a little remote. You'd be sitting down to lunch and you'd look out the window and he'd be floating through the long grass and daffodils outside. Since then, you know, he's much more mature and his manners have developed. He's much easier and nicer now—he's perfectly charming."

Jagger's marriage to Bianca, which lasted from 1971 to 1980, was said to have elevated him even further socially, but those were the druggy days of Studio 54 and the Halston-Minnelli-Warhol axis—the days of New York nightlife at its most decadent. Pop music fragmented. The arrival of reggae, disco, punk, and Eurosynth left the Stones scrambling to keep up, and Mick and Bianca seemed to spend most of their time vying with each other for gossip-column coverage. It wasn't until the late seventies and the eighties, when Jagger set up housekeeping with Jerry Hall, that he became, as one socialite puts it, "a part of international country-house life."

On Mustique or in the Loire Valley, Jagger and Hall entertain casually but well. "In France," says a friend, "you'd have tea and there'd be big trestle tables under the trees, with children and everybody mucking in, totally relaxed, grown-ups sharing joints maybe, and Mick out in the garden with Alvilde Lees-Milne." The food is good, as is the wine, and there are lots of games—Scrabble, backgammon, Dictionary, charades. Oh, yes, and maybe a little Saturday-night cross-dressing.

"Everybody loves it," says a frequent guest. "You're staying with Mick and Jerry in France, and everyone comes down to dinner in drag, and it's just huge fun. Masses of people sort of screaming, running in and out of each other's bedrooms, applying makeup to the boys. The English and the Irish—because he adores the mad Irish—love to do this. It's wild upper-class house-party behavior. It's nothing kinky or sexual. And Jerry has very much cottoned on to this. She was a truckdriver's daughter from Mesquite, Texas, but she's done very well at learning the ways of the British upper classes."

Hall is said to look lovely in drag—but not, perhaps, as lovely as her consort. "Mick was terribly dashing one night in a tight black shift and a ratty silver-fox fur," says one friend. "He was so chic, he looked like Coco Chanel."

But now Jagger is protesting again. "I don't think you should make too much of all that high-society thing," he says. "England's a very small place. I don't think you could avoid seeing different kinds of people. Keith and Bill and Charlie and Ronnie all know people in every class; they all know all the same people I know, or the same kinds of people. It's just that you never hear about it."

Of course, he's being disingenuous. You never hear about it because the rest of the Rolling Stones don't hobnob on nearly the same scale as their lead singer. Nor is their company quite so universally desirable. "Mick has real presence," says the American-born London hostess Marguerite Littman. "He's capable of mesmerizing. And he's so stylish. If he's underdressed, he makes everyone else in the room look like they should be dressed the way he is. He knows how to talk to people. He knows about gardening. He knows about wine and food. It's getting rather irritating."

Especially to Jagger. Twit him enough and he finally explodes. "I couldn't give a *shit* about gardening," he roars. "And wine? I think wine is so *bor*ing. There's red and there's white and I think there's pink. And they all taste good, and they all make you drunk. Nor am I interested in decorating, nor am I interested in collecting, in the slightest. The people that I pay to do those things all like to *say* I'm great at it, but that's because they think I'll pay them more!"

But in dancing clear of one pigeonhole, Jagger has just landed in another: the one that casts him as cheap and stingy, a miserly businessman who keeps a vulture eye glued to the bottom line. Perhaps he's a little bit guilty on this score. And yet if he occasionally gets caught counting out who had the egg salad and who had the corned beef, he's also known for buying fancy dinners for twenty, with terrific wine that he doesn't even touch. And though the British tabloids delight in running headlines about Jagger's penny-pinching, friends talk about how he offered to pay for the murder trial of the late Sex Pistol Sid Vicious, or how he offered to set up Andy Warhol's majordomo, Fred Hughes, as an art dealer.

"What he is," says his lighting designer, Patrick Woodroffe, "is a great manager. He gets this tight reputation, maybe, because he knows the right way to play people off against each other. Like in his solo tour of Japan, we had to work with a much smaller set than before, but we didn't want it to look bad. So the set people came in, and Mick said, 'Screw the money. It's got to be great no matter what it costs.' And then the set people left and the accountants came in, and Mick said to them, 'Look, you've got to make sure those guys don't spend too much.' Now, you could call that being manipulative, but the result was that we had really great sets."

Manipulative or not, Jagger the band manager must be doing something right. Last November the group signed a six-year contract with Virgin Records estimated at $45 million, which would make the Rolling Stones once again the highest-paid band in pop music. For Virgin, the deal looks a mite risky—the Stones, after all, are in their forties and fifties, and their last three albums totaled only about 3.5 million in sales in the United States. But Jagger (who will soon sign his next three solo albums to Atlantic Records, run by his old friend Ahmet Ertegün) doesn't feel any pressure. "Not at all," he says, his voice a nasal meow. "We don't have to even *start* an album for more than a year. It's all bullshit, all those numbers you read in the newspapers. They don't actually *give* you that money when you sign a piece of paper. If only they did—life would be really nice, wouldn't it?" He rolls his eyes. "You know, they *give* it to you in dribs and drabs—and eventually you spend it all anyway. But we're dividing it up between a lot of people. I'm not saying it's not a lot of money, but Virgin does hope to make a profit on this deal. They could probably be recouped with one new album and one boxed set of reissues."

As much as he used to warn his fans that he wouldn't still be shaking his booty and yowling "Satisfaction" when he hit forty (a milestone now nearly a decade past), Jagger seems fervently committed to the Stones. True, the band is a ball and chain more burdensome to him than any wife, and he often speaks of it wearily, even dyspeptically. But, given the disappointing sales of his first two solo albums (*She's the Boss* in 1985 and *Primitive Cool* in 1987), and his as yet lackluster movie career, Jagger knows he needs the Rolling Stones. They keep the limelight beaming.

Other Stones are not as addicted to the glow. What about bass player Bill Wyman, for instance, who refused to participate in the Virgin deal? Is he out? Jagger assumes a facetiously sepulchral tone. "It's a terrible thing," he murmurs, giving his head a solemn shake. "Gaw, I don't know how I'm going to live with it." Then, rather brightly: "I think Bill's kind of had enough of it all, really. I mean, I don't know, he seemed all right on the tour, but I guess he just doesn't

want to do any more. He's got enough money, and I suppose he feels he's done it. We haven't really talked it through, but I don't think I'd be out of order by saying that I doubt we would actually get someone new in the band who would be a permanent Rolling Stone. We'll go out on the tour and make a record with a bass player and then we'll see how that works over a two-year period."

More crucial is the band's central relationship, the one between Jagger and the guitarist Keith Richards. The two have known each other since they were five-year-olds, but their friendship crashed rather publicly during the eighties, when Jagger decided to promote his solo career instead of touring with the Stones. Richards came out with a solo album of his own, *Talk Is Cheap,* prominently featuring a song called "You Don't Move Me," an anti-Jagger diatribe reminiscent of John Lennon's attack on Paul McCartney in "How Do You Sleep?"

"What makes you so greedy, / makes you so seedy?" Richards sang, and, referring to Jagger's failed solo albums, "Now you want to throw the dice / You already crapped out twice."

"I don't think Mick is happy," Richards told an interviewer at the time. "He has hardly any friends and the ones he has beat him up because they get mad with him. He has a siege mentality and a Peter Pan complex." But by 1988, Richards was making conciliatory noises. "The thing is," he told the *Los Angeles Times,* "we've known each other for so long that we can go through these things and survive.... After all, we are just human and this is the kind of thing humans do." Phone calls were exchanged, and finally the peace process was moved to Barbados, where Jagger and Richards wrote the songs that would eventually appear on the *Steel Wheels* album. And now?

"Keith and I seem to be getting on all right," Jagger says. "The tour got all that out of our systems. We'd had enough. So we had a good time. We never had any major problems on the road, considering that we're both pretty volatile. We didn't have any rows or anything. Which is why I can blithely talk about doing it all again. Because if it had been a nightmare, I wouldn't be sitting here talking about Virgin deals and Rolling Stones tours. I'd be saying, Well, it was very nice, and it was a great ending to a wonderful..."

So the Stones will roll on, but that won't stop Jagger from pursuing other interests—such as the film business. "I'd like to do one movie every year," he says. Still, Jagger hasn't starred in a releasable picture since 1970, when he made both the enjoyably bizarre *Performance* and the ignominious *Ned Kelly,* and there's very little about his swaggering concert-stage persona that suggests much range. Movie actors need to be able to let the audience inside—the very thing Jagger the singer most assiduously avoids. And yet here he is in *Freejack,* playing a bounty hunter in the year 2009. His director, the estimable Geoff Murphy, thinks he can be a star. "His concentration is total," says Murphy, "and the camera loves him. With Mick, if you had him in the back row, the seventh spear-carrier from the left, your eyes would still go to him the moment he appeared. He's that strong."

"I'm quite serious about acting," says Jagger. "In some ways it's totally the same as singing. First of all, it's all to do with cameras and how you look. And that's what the music business is like—what you wear, how you look, what camera you look at, *where* you look, what you don't look at, where the light is, how you interact with other people, and whether you're nervous at all about doing it. I'm not particularly. I won't say I don't have the flutters occasionally, but, no, I'm not *really*. I would be kind of nervous about going on the stage. But there's lots of mechanics to keep you busy in making movies, just like singing onstage. It's all the same thing. You have to have a lot of self-discipline and a lot of front. A lot of balls. You have to have more front than Harrods.

"I'd also like to start writing pictures, and I'd like to start producing. I should really initiate projects rather than just accept them. I would make adventure movies, comedy, whatever, all different. Not very expensive, hopefully. But I think that's what I should do. It's just a question of switching your vision a little bit.

"I like producing things," he says. "It's not that I just like being in them. I like staging things." On tour, Jagger not only presides over the song order and the choreography, he picks the set designer and the lighting team, hassles with the local pols and bureaucrats, micromanages the budget, and makes sure the crew party goes off without a hitch. "I like to be involved in the way it looks and the way it's lit and how it's going to move and how it can be done for less money—I mean, all those things are important to me. I don't really like the business end all that much, but if you don't understand anything about it, you'll make terrible mistakes. I just have to know what the limits of the money are. That's as far as my interests go."

His friends disagree; they say that he's as obsessive about business as he is about everything else he does, that not even a phone bill gets paid without first undergoing his scrutiny.

But by now he's had enough, enough analysis, enough examination—enough of lepidopterists and their nets. The butterfly starts to dance, rolls his eyes, flaps his arms, lets his head loll back in a kind of Marat-dead-in-his-bath posture that evokes weariness, impatience, and a tincture of scorn. "Help!" he groans weakly, but then he snaps to, and claps a somewhat fiery gaze on me. "I *can't* take seriously what people say about me," he says. "You can't take it seriously if you want to keep sane. You just have to be who you are and just get on with it." And now his eyes soften beneath the feathery brows. "It's so long since I've been doing this. I've never done anything else. I've never been a welder or a teacher. I mean, I've led a very strange life. But you can't take any notice of people who say you're wonderful. You just laugh. And then you read the ones who say how bad you are, and you laugh at them too. You laugh at both ends of the spectrum. I certainly wouldn't claim anything extraordinary and wonderful for myself. You just do what you do. And you amuse yourself in the process."

And with that he's off, back into the control room, frugging again as he and the boys in the band trade the sort of media-savvy jokes that are the universal language of working musicians. I glance over at his children. Elizabeth has drawn a red horned figure on the plastic board; she has written the words "I am the..." and now she's asking her mother how to spell "devil." Hall looks up at me and grins almost shamefacedly. "You couldn't make this up, could you?" she says.

Whereupon, completely unbidden, little James picks up the thick Magic Marker he's been using to draw some sort of peculiar dog, and sticks it below his mouth like a microphone. And now he starts miming a song, tossing his head back and forth, and from side to side. He catches my eye for a moment, and then, feeding on the attention, begins to dance around, wagging his head, bouncing his shoulders. Across the room, his father is bouncing, too, intent and oblivious, singing along with the song called "Soul Control" that's thundering through the speakers. I look from one to the other, from Jagger *père* to Jagger *fils,* each doing his own version of the crazy little dance that changed the world. Who can doubt that rock 'n' roll is here to stay? □

So Long, Sununu

(Continued from page 113) "At meeting after meeting [of House Republicans], tales would be brought back," recalls Douglas. "Then it was open warfare."

Sununu's own staff quivered in his presence. Hardly anyone would deliver bad news to him. Before a staff meeting the morning after a bill was lost in Congress, Sununu turned to Fred McClure, the legislative liaison, who was reading the newspaper: "What are you reading, Fred? The Help Wanted ads?"

In the summer and fall of 1990, the White House and Congress mud-wrestled over a budget agreement. The president shifted his positions, sometimes daily. His rescinding of his Read My Lips campaign promise not to raise taxes enraged House Republicans. And Sununu's behavior infuriated everyone, regardless of party. In the closed negotiating sessions at Andrews Air Force Base with congressional leaders accustomed to an elaborate etiquette and a certain deference, he demonstrated a crudeness they had never encountered. According to one of those present, Senator Robert Byrd, the former majority leader, eventually felt compelled to admonish him: "I have had thirty years in the U.S. Senate, and I have participated in many such summits, and I have never in my life observed such outrageous conduct as that displayed by the representatives of the president of the United States. Your conduct is arrogant. It is rude. It is intolerable." Sununu quieted down for a few days before reverting to form.

Republicans particularly felt his lash. In a televised press conference, Sununu dismissed Senator Trent Lott as "insignificant." The chief of staff was no longer on speaking terms with the House G.O.P. whip, Representative Newt Gingrich. At a closed meeting of House Republicans, Sununu threatened that he would send the president to campaign against Representative Carl Pursell, who dissented from the budget agreement. "I have never had a staffer threaten me," Pursell replied. *A staffer!* The 150 Republicans in the room spontaneously burst into sharp applause. With one word the self-inflated Sununu had been reduced to Lilliputian size. A staffer! "Sometimes," Representative Robert Michel, the minority leader, said afterward, "we have to remind Governor Sununu that this is not the New Hampshire legislature."

Bob Dole, on whom Bush was utterly dependent in the Senate, took to calling Sununu "the chief of chaff." Sununu, for his part, took to telephoning Dole's press secretary, Walt Riker, to shout obscenities when he didn't like what he heard Riker had said.

Sununu's vendettas against the members of his own party extended to petty acts of retribution. Representative Ralph Regula, an Old Guard Republican who had not backed the budget agreement, arranged tickets to the Kennedy Center presidential box for two constituents who had won a day with their congressman in a charity raffle. The day they arrived in Washington, Sununu canceled the tickets. "If Regula was going to get brutalized," says Douglas, "no one was safe. So you think: How could George Bush not know this? For a guy who allegedly makes two hundred phone calls a week to all his buddies and served in the House with people who were brutalized by Sununu, you'd think he knew." (Douglas, who was divorced three times, became the target of stinging statements from the otherwise invisible Nancy Sununu, who attacked him for his "loose life-style." In 1990, Douglas was defeated by a Democrat whose mass mailings prominently featured Nancy Sununu's disparaging remarks.)

Undoubtedly, George Bush, the "constituency of one," *was* aware of Sununu's maneuverings. At one point during the budget negotiations, Sununu tried to manipulate the president's position by claiming that he had agreed not to raise tax rates for the wealthy—which Bush had never done. Bush was forced to demonstrate his good faith by saying that everything was negotiable, as he had promised. The result was that, because of Sununu, Bush appeared to have flip-flopped. The president was reportedly so angry with his chief of staff that he slammed a door on him, leaving him alone in an empty room. Nevertheless, Bush still found Sununu useful enough to shut him *inside* the room.

In the heat of the budget imbroglio, Sununu's abhorrence of the press reached a boiling point. He had never bothered to disguise how he felt about journalists. "Small minds ask small questions," he had dismissively told a group of reporters. But now he became obsessed with leaks, as if plugging them would put an end to the criticism. He directed his deputy, Ed Rogers, to investigate who on the White House staff was whispering to whom. Rogers spent hours highlighting quotes in newspaper articles with a yellow marker. Meanwhile, Sununu instructed the White House staff to turn in their colleagues if they suspected them of betrayal.

The chief of staff developed a special hatred for Maureen Dowd of *The New York Times*, who showed a disturbing ability to uncover what he was actually doing. On November 17, 1990, she reported that "Mr. Darman [the budget director] and Mr. Sununu privately blamed the President for his inability to understand the nuance of the position they had devised for him, which they believed resulted in Mr. Bush's embarrassing flip-flops on taxes." Sununu flew into a rage, ordering Rogers to protest to Howell Raines, the *Times*'s Washington bureau chief. "The story," Raines says, "was right on the money. We stood by it. I invited him to have Sununu call me. I told him the same thing. He got extremely agitated and used the most extreme language I've ever heard in a conversation of that type. The vituperation was quite extraordinary. This was an unusual way for an important Washington figure to conduct himself on the telephone."

At Sununu's press briefings, many reporters simply stopped taking notes. The problem was not access—it was credibility. He could shout as much as he wanted, but it was just sound and fury. The full repercussions of the damage he had done to himself, however, were put on hold when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait.

Within the councils of government, Sununu's influence quickly ebbed. He knew next to nothing about the military or foreign policy; at a meeting early in the crisis, he asked where Mecca was. And because the president wanted to keep his national-security meetings confined to a small group, Sununu was often excluded. Secretary of Defense Cheney, in effect, became the chief of staff for the Gulf War. (Sununu had already offended Cheney by declining to allow him the use of a presidential helicopter for official business. "Why spend billions on a supercollider when we already have John Sununu?" Cheney later cracked at a Gridiron dinner.)

Privately, Sununu complained that he ought to be the chief of staff for everything, according to a source who heard him out. After all, wasn't that what he was there for? But while the president and his war council were engaged in foreign adventure, Sununu was left home alone.

Being relegated to the sidelines didn't dampen Sununu's ambition. Without comprehending that his career was teetering, he ordered his staff to research whether his birth in Havana disqualified him from running for president. But he was about to suffer another blow. At the age of thirty-nine, Lee Atwater was diagnosed as having an inoperable brain tumor.

As Atwater lay dying, Bush, consumed with the coming war, left the selection of the next R.N.C. chairman to Sununu. The

obvious replacement was Rich Bond, who had been a top Bush campaign aide in 1980, a high-level R.N.C. official, and now ran his own political-consulting firm. He belonged to the same clique of Washington politicos as Atwater had. Mary Matalin, Atwater's deputy at the R.N.C., was for Bond. So were members of the Bush family. George Bush Jr. called Bond, urging him to seek the post.

The gathering consensus, however, raised Sununu's suspicions. Bond's independence was troubling. His ties with Bush went back further than Sununu's. The choice must not be Bond. Rather, it must be—and this came like a bolt from the blue in early December 1990—William Bennett. Almost as abrasive as Sununu, the former drug czar was an ideological neoconservative, a former Democrat despised by Democratic congressional leaders as well as factional foes on the right. Sununu's choice for the R.N.C. chair had no base within the Republican Party. He was a bull in search of a china shop.

The Bennett selection stung Bond, angered most of Atwater's friends, alienated almost all the other G.O.P. consultants, and distressed the staffers at the R.N.C. These were the people who ran the Republican Party's campaigns. They had destroyed the reputations of Democrats for much less than what Sununu had done to them. Atwater, moreover, had not even received a phone call from Sununu informing him that he was to lose his title as chairman, and that Bennett would be his successor. This particular point enraged Atwater's friends, who said that he was upset by the slight. "There was no question that it was a nasty thing to do," says one Republican consultant.

Then, just as suddenly as Bennett was named, he withdrew. He couldn't make enough money on the job, he explained: "I didn't take a vow of poverty." Adding insult to injury, Bond was passed over a second time. Bush chose Clayton Yeutter, a colorless reliable; Sununu's political capital continued to depreciate.

As the Gulf War victory parades wound through towns and cities, the chief of staff was suddenly in the headlines again. In April 1991, *The Washington Post* reported that Sununu had taken more than sixty personal and political trips on military aircraft, including ski vacations and trips to his Boston dentist. He defended himself by providing misleading records and stonewalling. Bush tried to patch things up by describing it all as an "appearance problem." Sununu pledged he would not misuse his perquisites again, but soon afterward he commandeered a White House limousine to drive him to New York to attend a stamp auction. Now he was expressly forbidden limos or military planes for personal use. The *Post* reported that Sununu was privately blaming "the Jews" and the media. He was being drowned in a torrent of leaking.

Consultants advised him to have his staff bring him to Union Station, with the media in tow, and put him on Amtrak. "He didn't want to do it," says one of the advisers, "because he thought it would be a humiliation. He saw it all as an injustice. He didn't really know how to handle it."

Brent Scowcroft, the national-security adviser, not known as a Jay Leno, began joking about "Air Sununu." His ridicule was a sign that Sununu had become defenseless, or at least indefensible. Bob Dole, who is known for his vicious wit, suggested that when Sununu attended meetings he ought to be asked "whether he wants a window or an aisle."

Sununu quietly sought more advice. One seasoned politico counseled him to heal his breach with House Republicans, stop humiliating the White House staff, and avoid picking fights with the press. "He'd failed to realize that, to keep the 'constituency of one' happy, he had to keep a lot of constituencies happy." Sununu listened but seemed incapable of helping himself.

At Lee Atwater's funeral in the National Cathedral, Sununu sat in the front, with the president. "He didn't understand what Lee's death meant to him," says a political consultant who had been friendly with both of them. "In the beginning, he felt he owed a lot to Lee. By the end, he felt that Lee owed a lot to him."

Sununu spent much of the fall battling the Civil Rights Bill. The chief of staff trashed every compromise offered by Senator Jack Danforth, a Republican from Missouri who had been invited into the process by Bush. Danforth blasted back at "divisive racial politics." In the end, Bush agreed to sign.

After the ceremony, Sununu waylaid the *Post*'s White House correspondent, Ann Devroy. "Everything you write is lies," he told her. He was obliquely referring to her report that it was his suggestion that had prompted the president to call for a reduction in credit-card interest rates, which sent the stock market plunging. The next day, November 22, on John McLaughlin's *One on One* television show, he blamed Bush for "ad-libbing" his remark calling for a reduction in credit-card interest rates. What Sununu revealed may well have been the truth, but what was extraordinary was the spectacle of a chief of staff trying to save himself by slashing his president. If cornered, Sununu would even resort to regicide.

"There are plenty of assholes in Washington," says a Republican consultant. "Everyone knows Sununu was an ogre. An ogre has its place. Bush kept him as his ogre for three years. But you can be an ogre only so long as you keep certain elements in place." When Bush was a conqueror, Sununu was a minor distraction who still had his uses. But with a faltering economy, the president's popularity rating was dipping precipitously, and the increasingly uncontrollable Sununu was becoming a luxury tax on Bush's future that he could no longer afford. Deep in difficulty, the president had to launch his re-election campaign immediately. But with Sununu involved, no one would work in it. The indispensable man in 1988 was now the one who most needed to be dispensed with in order to begin the drive in 1992.

In the last week of November, the chief of staff's door was darkened by George

CREDITS

Page 4: Photographs, top to bottom, from Reuters/Bettmann, by Firooz Zahedi, Jean-Luce Huré. **Page 8:** Photographs: Bottom left, sweater from Sulka, N.Y.C., Chicago, and Beverly Hills. Center, jacket from the Giorgio Armani Boutique, N.Y.C. and Beverly Hills; shirt from Alan Bilzerian, Boston, and Ralph Davies, San Francisco; sunglasses by Christian Roth for Optical Affairs, from Morgenthal-Frederics Opticians, N.Y.C., and Optical Designs, Santa Monica. Right, shirt exclusively from Untitled, N.Y.C.; jeans from Patricia Field, N.Y.C., and Red Balls on Fire, L.A.; belt from the Gianni Versace Boutique, N.Y.C. and Beverly Hills. **Page 12:** Photographs by Robert Manella (Schiff, Orth), Jerry Bauer (Tynan), Chris Hartlove (Blumenthal). **Page 56:** Photograph courtesy of *Mystery!* **Page 64:** Photographs, top, from Gamma-Liaison; bottom, from Look Photo/Stills. **Page 66:** Photograph from Gamma-Liaison. **Page 68:** Photograph from Sygma. **Page 76:** Photograph styled by Eileen Kasofsky; hair by Rudy Townsel; makeup by Maria Verel. **Page 78:** Photographs, left, from Ron Galella Ltd.; right, from D.M.I. **Page 80:** Photographs courtesy of Nora Ephron. **Page 94:** Photographs, top, left to right, by Martha Swope, Bert Stern, from *Prodigal Son*, published by Simon & Schuster. **Page 98:** Photographs, top, hair by Raphael Cohen, makeup by Beth Katz for Cloutier; bottom, left to right, by Adam Scull/Globe Photos, Fred Coombs/Globe Photos, Frank W. Ockenfels 3/Outline Press. **Pages 104–5:** Shirt from If, N.Y.C., and Tyler Trafficante, L.A.; leggings from the Gianni Versace Boutique, N.Y.C. and Beverly Hills. **Page 109:** Photograph from Impact Visuals. **Page 113:** Photograph from Reuters/Bettmann. **Pages 114–15:** Stole from Fred Segal Couture, Santa Monica; earrings from the Shauna Stein Vintage Collection; fake-fur rug from International Silks and Woolens. **Page 119:** Photographed for, and courtesy of, *The World of Interiors*. **Pages 120–21:** Photographs, left to right, by Roxanne Lowit, Jean-Luce Huré, Pat Arnal/Stills/Retna. **Pages 122–23:** Styled by Evyan Metzner; grooming by Maria Verel. **Page 124:** Photograph from U.P.I./Bettmann. **Page 130:** Photograph from Camera Press/Globe Photos. **Page 132:** Photographs, top, from Photofest; bottom, by Bachrach, courtesy of Natasha Richardson. **Page 133:** Photographs, far right, by Cliff Lipson/Orion Pictures Corp.; others, from Photofest. **Pages 134–35:** Earrings from Artwear, N.Y.C. **Page 137:** Dress from Saks Fifth Avenue and Martha, both in N.Y.C., and Neiman Marcus, Dallas. **Page 141:** Photographs, top and center, courtesy of Gay Talese; bottom, by Bruce Davidson/Magnum. **Page 143:** Photograph from Globe Photos. **Page 174:** Photograph reproduced with the permission of Joanna T. Steichen.

So Long, Sununu

Bush Jr., who informed him that his support within the Republican political community had evaporated. This was the equivalent of a disgraced Roman senator being told that he could still preserve his family's honor as he was handed a dagger.

But Sununu interpreted Junior's message differently. He thought it meant that he should show the president just how invaluable and popular he was. So he set out to rouse his nonexistent supporters. He begged House Republicans to call the president, please. But only a couple of them were willing to make even halfhearted public statements. "I was trying to rally support," Sununu's most prominent defender, William Bennett, said later, "but it was tough. People were saying, 'Gee, I like John. He is conservative. But he was mean to me.' " Sununu pleaded desperately with Dole, whose presidential aspirations he had demolished in New Hampshire, to contact Bush. The irony, according to a source close to Dole, was not exactly lost on the senator, who telephoned Bush to say, "You make the call." In the meantime, Sununu's myriad enemies fed the press blind quotes about how soon the final curtain would fall.

On the last weekend in November, the president retreated to Camp David with Robert Mosbacher and James Baker, Sununu enemies, to discuss the 1992 campaign. The exclusion of Sununu could not have been a clearer indication of his future.

Usually, John Sununu was visible on Air Force One, playing with his Nintendo Game Boy. But he was nowhere to be seen on Tuesday, December 3, when the president and his chief of staff went on a long-planned jaunt to illustrate Bush's interest in domestic affairs. The first stop was a Tropicana orange-juice factory in Bradenton, Florida. "I'm here to learn about oranges," declared Bush, sporting a hard hat. But the reporters were interested in only one issue: when would Sununu be fired? "I haven't seen him," said press secretary Marlin Fitzwater. "He's been in the president's cabin all morning."

The next stop was the Peavey Electronics factory in Meridian, Mississippi, which manufactures electric guitars and amplifiers. When Bush was serenaded a cappella by a country group singing "The Star-Spangled Banner," Sununu was missing from his side. Just as Bush was being handed a guitar with an American flag painted on it, Fitzwater called to the traveling press. He held two pieces of paper: one was Sununu's resignation letter, the other Bush's acceptance.

In his handwritten note, Sununu described the White House as "an unbelievably 'fun place' to work." But amid his flowery effusions of gratitude to the president, Sununu clarified their relationship. "I think you know," he wrote pointedly, "that the responsibility and authority (contrary to the legends out there) never meant as much to me as the chance to assist you to be (and to be recognized) a great President." Then Sununu stuck in his lance: "I assure you that in pit bull mode or pussey [*sic*] cat mode (your choice, as always) I am ready to help."

"In the sense that I think he's handled it so well, I must say you're talking about a class act," Bush told the press on the plane as Sununu stood in his shadow. "Keep it on a positive tone," the president urged about the postmortems.

Within days, the fax machines on Capitol Hill were merrily humming with the transmission of an anonymous poem, composed in the style of Dr. Seuss:

The time has come.
  The time is now.
Just go.
  Go.
  GO!
I don't care how.
You can go by foot.
  You can go by cow.
John H. Sununu,
  Will you please go now!
You can go by plane.
  O.M.B. agrees.
You can even take the limo.
  But please go.
  Please!
You can use the phone
  And call when you please.
You can go to New Hampshire
  And bring your skis.
You can take Ed Rogers
  And go to L.A.
You can also take Darman
  And C. Boyden Gray.
You can bike if you like
  Or run or hike.
John H. Sununu,
  I don't care how.
John H. Sununu,
  Will you please GO NOW!
Now don't get mad
  And please don't pout.
You ought to get the message
  So please don't shout.
John H. Sununu,
  Don't you know.
The time has come
  To go.
  Go.
  GO!
And so John H. Sununu,
  I really don't care how.
John H. Sununu,
  Just please GO NOW!
Go I said
  And go I meant.
And lo! He got it,
  And out he went.

But where would he go now? While he was in Washington, the New Hampshire Miracle had capsized: the state was in its worst straits since the Great Depression. Sununu's old dream, the vast nuclear-power complex at Seabrook, had bankrupted its owner. A majority of New Hampshire residents approved his resignation; his unfavorability rating in the state was more than double that of his favorable one. Feigning a lack of interest in what was beyond his reach, he would not, he said, run for the Senate if a seat were vacated. "Maybe," he told reporters, "I'll do to whoever runs what I did to Mike Dukakis." He yearned to return to the beginning, to the trenches, where he had won his fame and power. But Sununu himself was serving his master in the Dukakis role: as his ethnic scapegoat.

Two days after Sununu was forced out, Bush unveiled his re-election committee and his new chief of staff, Samuel Skinner, a moderate Republican from Illinois who was formerly the secretary of transportation. Skinner's first task was to expunge the stain of his predecessor. Repeatedly and pointedly, he spoke of his plan for an "inclusive approach" to "let valued advice get to the president."

A portrait of Bush's new team would be a tableau of Sununu's assassins. Each one had plunged a knife into his back. Mosbacher was now the general campaign chairman. And smiling alongside him were Robert Teeter, Rich Bond, Mary Matalin, and assorted other anti-Sununu-ites. Bush's new handlers looked like the last scene in *Murder on the Orient Express*.

But the president's political problems have become so great that merely ridding himself of Sununu will not dispose of them. The reason he had become the scapegoat was not just that he was exceedingly unpleasant, but also that everyone had come to operate under the assumption that Bush was a man with a spinning compass. All offended parties fell into the easy game of blaming the evil servant for guiding the drifting master in the wrong direction. Now that the underling is gone, though, who will be blamed? And who will serve as the next eager henchman? It's hard to imagine that George Bush will find one as perfect as John Sununu. "Thanks again for the privilege of serving you and this wonderful country," wrote the chief of staff as he walked the plank. "It really has been great!!!" □

JFK

(Continued from page 129) off by a few determined operators who managed to remain undiscovered because the real powers of the nation were all terrified of their own possible implication, so terrified that evidence was buried and all real inquiry paralyzed—no, what if it were even worse than that, what if the assassination was designed by powerful people for large purposes? Once, as a guide for approaching political questions that do not have a quick answer, Lenin laid down the axiom "Whom? Whom does this benefit?" and by that measure, yes, to the degree that history conforms more or less directly to the needs of power and policy, then, yes, if Kennedy was going to end the war in Vietnam, he had to be replaced; Lyndon Johnson was the man to do it.

History, rarely tidy, is not always so functional. Stone's movie offers us the overarching paradigm, not the solution, and that becomes a large part of its power. It is a crude movie driven home with strong colors and heavy strokes, as indeed all of his films have been. He is one of our few major directors, but he can also be characterized as a brute who rarely eschews that heavy stroke. All the same, he has the integrity of a brute, he forages where others will not go, and the result is that we live for three hours in the ongoing obsession of our national lives. (Be it recognized that, while our psyches are obviously devoted in the main to our private concerns, larger and larger grows the national sector of our souls.) So we descend again into that obsession to which we know it is better not to return, that dark land where no answers are provided. It is amazing how powerful the film becomes. Even when one knows the history of the Garrison investigation and the considerable liberties that Stone has taken with the material, it truly does not matter, one soon decides, for no film could ever be made of the Kennedy assassination that would be accurate. There are too many theories and too much contradictory evidence. Tragedies of this dimension can be approached only as myths. Here, the one that we are witnessing exerts upon us the whole force of Greek drama, and we return again and again to that national chorus of which we were a part on November 22, 1963—we live again in the mystery, the awe, the horror, and the knowledge that a huge and hideous event did, yes, take place on that day, and the gods had warred, a god fell, and the nation could never be the same.

It did not have to be Oliver Stone who made this film. Another director and another script bearing on the same events would have been as powerful if it had dared as much, but Stone is entitled to the kudos he will probably not receive, for he was the first to enter the caves of this obsession and live in them through the year and more of writing, shooting, editing, and being assailed by the media; he was the first moviemaker to be fevered by the heat and chilled with the terror that what he was daring to say about this assassination could keep him sleepless, and will, I expect, until he learns whether this huge gamble, this spelunker's reconnaissance into the caverns of the American horror, will be well received at the box office or rejected by a new generation of television Americans who will choose no aesthetic experience powerful enough to stay with them into the morning after. If so, then the question to ask is whether the attempt to capture greatness has become the most unacceptable aesthetic endeavor of them all. In that case, *JFK,* the crudest of the great movies, but a great movie, will have to rest in peace.

That is one scenario. If, on the other hand, *JFK* proves successful, then there is no way in which the point will not be raised by Lardner & Co. that Stone's mythic presentation of the murder of President Kennedy is a monstrous act, for it is going to be accepted as fact by a new generation of moviegoers. One can only shrug. Several generations have already grown up with the mind-stultifying myth of the lone assassin. Let cinematic hyperbole war then with the Establishment's skewed reality. At times, bullshit can only be countered with superior bullshit. Stone's version has, at least, the virtue of its thoroughgoing metaphor.

Acoda. Reviewing Thomas Reeves's book on John Fitzgerald Kennedy's private life, *A Question of Character,* Jonathan Yardley, the book-review whip for *The Washington Post,* offered these neo-puritanical comments the Sunday after Lardner's attack on Oliver Stone appeared:

> [Reeves] undertakes to assess Kennedy not merely in political or mythological terms, but in moral ones. . . . Though Reeves does not quite come right out and say so, his analysis suggests that the assassination of John F. Kennedy, however cruel and ghastly, may have spared the nation something even worse than the prolonged orgy of grief and hagiography that followed it. He suggests that the gentlemen's agreement by which details of Kennedy's private life were kept secret might well have been violated, for whatever reason, during a second term, and that a vote of impeachment might well have followed.
>
> This, had it come to pass, could have been more damaging even than Watergate. The spectacle of a president of the United States on trial for illicit liaisons within and without the White House, for questionable relationships with ranking figures of the underworld—this would have been more than the United States of the mid-1960s could have stomached. The proceedings would have torn us apart in ways we can scarcely imagine, and left us with a cynicism about politics by contrast with which the residue of Watergate would seem a mild case of disenchantment. Better that the handsome young president died a mythical if not actual hero, and that the true story of his character emerged so tentatively and gradually that we were given time to come to terms with it. Had we been forced to bear in a single blow the full import of the story Thomas Reeves tells, it would have shattered us.

What this singular assessment provides is the new notion that the determination to get rid of Kennedy, if it had failed in the overt attempt, might well have moved on to impeachment, a more protracted affair. So we are free to wonder, having been given not only the presidential models over the last three decades of Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, and Bush, but also the secondary examples of Humphrey, McGovern, Mondale, and Dukakis, whether any protagonist as innovative, flexible, daring, ironic, witty, and as ready to grow as Jack Kennedy ever did have a chance to change the shape of our place.

Or is it that we will do anything to get rid of an obsession, even buy the proposition that the guy who gives us the problem in the first place is better off dead? The Washington Club has many mansions, and Yardley Court is the newest. □

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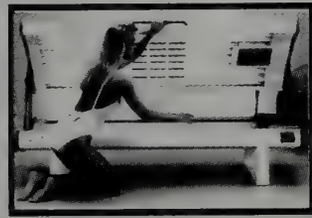

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Planetarium

AQUARIUS ♒ *January 20–February 18*

When you write your autobiography, you will probably title the chapter on the period just ahead "When Rats Leave Ships." You must be very nervous now, and that's perfectly understandable. The conjunction of Neptune and Uranus that has been approaching your 12th house since 1988 is finally culminating, and it will last through most of 1993. You probably feel as if you are buried up to your neck in sand, and the tide is coming in, and suddenly everyone around you has decided to leave the beach. Fear not. This is the universe's cute little way of forcing you to have faith.

PISCES ♓ *February 19–March 20*

If anyone were to tell you that your life is not your own right now, you'd probably just yawn and mutter, "So what else is new?" You think you've seen it all, heard it all, and, heaven knows, done it all. But surprise! Over the next year and a half, the current Uranus-Neptune conjunction may sweep a few people out of your life forever, but it will also definitely carry you further along on your Great Mission. Who knows? Because of you the Israelis may invite the Arabs for Passover. As usual, everybody in your vicinity will be benefiting from your efforts. But, as you yourself so often say, "So what else is new?"

ARIES ♈ *March 21–April 19*

Your rise in the months ahead could be more meteoric than Diana Ross's was after she dumped the Supremes. On the other hand, the Uranus-Neptune conjunction could get you tossed out of your office on your butt with barely enough time to get the kids' pictures off the desk. There's no way to tell with these two planets. The effects are really not sudden, and they hardly come as a surprise. In fact, this overthrow is desperately needed. For the last few years you've tried your hardest to be normal and respectable, and these efforts have been admirable. A laugh riot, in your case, but still admirable.

TAURUS ♉ *April 20–May 20*

You're usually a fairly righteous person. Sure, you've snitched your share of jelly beans at the candy store, but your thinking up to now has certainly been along orthodox lines. Some might call your opinions positively *Vaticanistic*. Over the next eighteen months, though, your philosophy of life will explode in all sorts of new directions. Maybe aliens have implanted a device in your nose which allows you to think more openly. Once, you would have scoffed at such an idea, but you'll find yourself changing so much that you will probably sneak over to the mirror to take a look at that nose.

GEMINI ♊ *May 21–June 21*

Keep on mud-wrestling with financing and refinancing, if you must. Go on worrying about exactly how that ax will fall and when. But the big news is the Uranus-Neptune conjunction in your 8th house, and for you that means exploring your sexuality. Dyed-in-the-wool gays and lesbians will have a few heretical hetero thoughts, and confirmed straights may find themselves browsing through target-audience magazines they shouldn't be looking at. In your efforts to push beyond the limits of your usual sexual behavior, remember that this is the nineties, *not* the seventies.

CANCER ♋ *June 22–July 22*

Within a year, you've been hit by two eclipses—one last July, one this January—and that means that you will have to find a sane balance between losing yourself totally in somebody else and becoming so narcissistic you bore everyone to death with your same old story. You can always go on looking people straight in the eye and preaching independence and freedom, then skulk back alone to your little lair to suck your thumb. Or you can put all your eggs in a nice basket with no bottom and go for a mad, mad relationship, even wackier than the one Mrs. Muir had with the Ghost.

LEO ♌ *July 23–August 22*

Until the fall of 1993, the Uranus-Neptune conjunction should certainly put your focus on health and work. Your body is doing wild and woolly things now. You can feel sure that you're healthy, and the next minute the doctor will scare you with some weird medical term. Or you can feel vague and queer, and 806 tests will show absolutely nothing. At work you think you have the job thing knocked. Then whammo! You're collecting unemployment and working on a new résumé. The minute it's done, you're offered a job that will pay health insurance. All that back and forth could cause mild nausea—that and pregnancy.

VIRGO ♍ *August 23–September 22*

The Uranus-Neptune conjunction in your 5th house signifies a moment when children must take leave of their parents—always a source of intestinal agitation for Virgos. It could also inspire you to create ingenious devices, have fascinating relationships with Capricorns, and become involved with the theater of the absurd, which, in the case of a Virgo, is even more absurd. Stepping out of your usual role, you're no longer the left-brain geek, passing the time of day doing square roots just for the heck of it. Now the other hemisphere of your brain is kicking in, and you could even end up acting like an Italian.

LIBRA ♎ *September 23–October 23*

When you were a kid, one of your pet peeves *had* to have been a parent you were supposed to support, cheer up, and make nice-nice with. Many Libras try to escape by leaping into marriage, where more often than not they only repeat the same process. *Don't let this happen to you!* The Uranus-Neptune conjunction in your 4th house is your chance to smash those icons and abandon all those fears of abandonment. Remember, you have a *self*, whether your parents or boss or guardians think so or not. The time has come when you can no longer go on making nice-nice during the day and growling in your sleep.

SCORPIO ♏ *October 24–November 21*

From now until about September 1993, the Uranus-Neptune conjunction will demand responses from you in the following areas. (1) Siblings: Expand your vision to understand their behavior, unless, of course, you are an only child. (2) Eyesight: See an optometrist. (3) Communication: Your normally crisp style will be subject to blurring, so don't expect everyone to receive your wishes instantly and telepathically. (4) Transportation: Since you'll be buzzing around a lot, you'll probably want instant transplantation, but remember what happened to Jeff Goldblum in *The Fly*. Travel conventionally.

SAGITTARIUS ♐ *November 22–December 21*

Here's your life for the next year and a half with a Uranus-Neptune conjunction in your 2nd house: There's a bank error in your favor, and you collect $500. The next day you lose your shirt in the stock market. But then you win the lottery, only to learn they're paying in Confederate money. Suddenly the judge decides you have been wronged, and the insurance company coughs up five mil. You put the money in a suitcase, and on your way to the airport (you're retiring to Tahiti on a windy day) the thing snaps open and the dough flies out. But then a millionaire comes along and saves you. Get the picture?

CAPRICORN ♑ *December 22–January 19*

The Wicked Witch of the West—who was a Capricorn, by the way—went around scaring people with orange smoke and flaming brooms. But she was probably just doing to everybody else what her mother had done to her. Once she was doused with a little cold water, all her wickedness vanished. The Uranus-Neptune conjunction of 1992–93 will have the same effect on you; it should blow away all your anger, wash away your fear, and end the family curse forever. All you have to do is let your tight-assed self be dissolved. And the best part is that no one will punish you for it. Take a few courses in social work.

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Ethel Merman

Vanity Fair
February 1931

"Never, but never," George Gershwin implored Ethel Merman, "go near a singing teacher." That was on the night the twenty-two-year-old torch singer from Astoria, Queens, made her sensational Broadway debut, as Kate, the gambler's bride (above), in the 1930 hit *Girl Crazy,* the Gershwins' rousing if improbable tale of a Park Avenue playboy cut loose in the Wild West. At the premiere the composer himself led the Red Nichols band (with guest players Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller, Jimmy Dorsey, Gene Krupa, and Jack Teagarden), popular leading man Allen Kearns, and a nineteen-year-old ingenue, Ginger Rogers, in such songs as "But Not for Me" and "Embraceable You." But it was Merman, belting out "I Got Rhythm" in what Ira Gershwin referred to as "a no-nonsense voice that could reach not only standees but ticket-takers in the lobby," who held a final high C for sixteen breathless bars, and brought the house down—night after night. This month, *Girl Crazy* returns to Broadway at the Shubert Theatre with the more politically correct title *Crazy for You,* starring Harry Groener, Jodi Benson, and the Manhattan Rhythm Kings and featuring five previously unpublished Gershwin songs. Who could ask for anything more?

Photograph by STEICHEN

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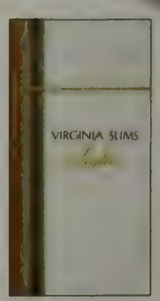

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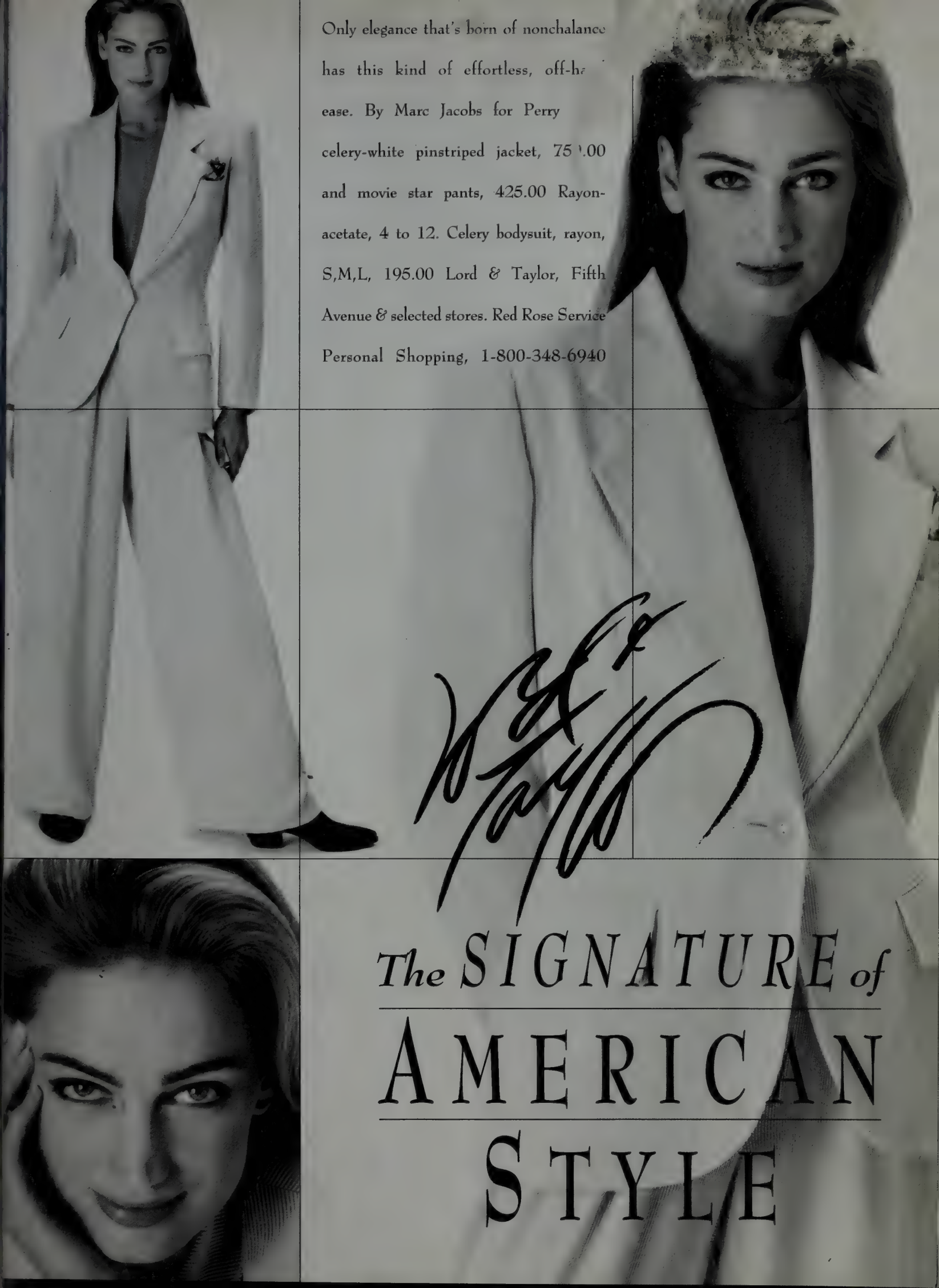
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VANITY FAIR

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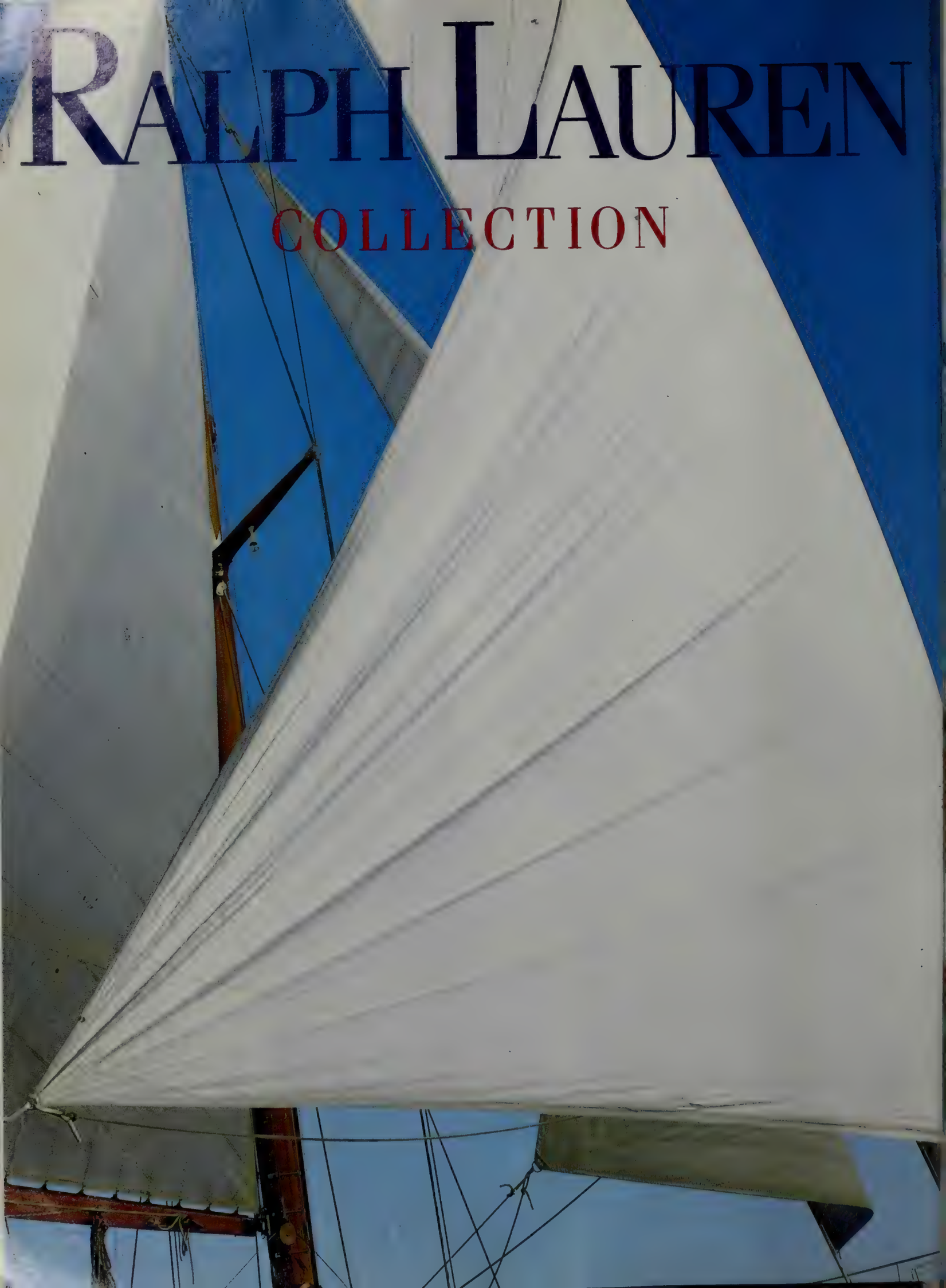

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Editor's Letter

The Maxwell Mysteries

JEAN PAGLIUSO

Who was Robert Maxwell? The cartoon press baron, owner of Britain's *Daily Mirror* and Macmillan in the United States, was greeted as a hero in New York when he "saved" the *Daily News* last year. It was yet another act in his perpetual reinvention of himself from Holocaust refugee to British parliamentarian, from business failure to big-time player in the global media game.

The only consistent theme in Maxwell's life was mystery, and he perpetuated it even in death. Did he fall from his yacht, the *Lady Ghislaine*, or was he pushed? He was a bully and a blowhard, but could he have been so cruel as to commit suicide, leaving his sons Kevin and Ian to almost certain criminal indictment rather than face his own ruin? Was the man given a resplendent state burial in hallowed ground on the Mount of Olives a Mossad agent? Was he a dedicated family man or a sexual ogre fixated on Filipino midgets?

At the center of the orgy of speculation and revelation there remains the anguished figure of "Captain Bob's" newly impoverished widow, Betty, a Frenchwoman of dignity and character. At the age of seventy, she is finally being forced to recognize that she did not know the man she was married to. In exclusive interviews with Betty and their daughter Ghislaine Maxwell, Edward Klein reports on page 180 on the private frustrations of the émigré Jew who felt he was never accepted by the British establishment. From the boardrooms of London and New York, former *New York Times Magazine* editor Klein pieces together the frantic machinations as the curtain came down on Maxwell's last charade.

Perhaps the real key to this character out of Trollope lies in the death camps of World War II. Having survived the extinction of his family, he may have felt he could survive thereafter only by being larger than life, borne along on a balloon of publicity and hype. Suicide with a web of mystery attached would therefore be the perfect Maxwellian solution. As Martin Amis suggested about Salman Rushdie, Maxwell has disappeared into the headlines.

This is the first-anniversary issue of *Vanity Fair*'s debut in Britain and the ninth in the United States. It has been a year of extraordinary growth. It is pleasing to report that in the second half of 1991 the U.S. *Vanity Fair* gained 201,000 new readers and has a circulation of 991,000 copies. In Europe, we are proud that the British edition has a circulation of 63,500. Thanks for staying with us—and joining us—in these less than buoyant times.

Tina Brown

Editor in chief

Cover

One-Woman Circus

Step right up and see the one and only Goldie Hawn ride the giant four-ton pachyderm. Watch as the lady performs death-defying stunts. *Above*, Goldie in makeup. *Left*, her performing partner, Tai, a twenty-four-year-old Indian elephant, in Los Angeles.

Goldie Hawn wears a gold bodysuit by Giorgio di Sant'Angelo. Shoes by Maud Frizon. Hair by Peter Savic and makeup by Joanne Gair, both for Cloutier. Styled by Marina Schiano. Photographed exclusively for *V.F.* by Annie Leibovitz.

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Contributors

Peter J. Boyer is working on a nonfiction book for Random House.

Ben Brantley reports regularly from New York, Los Angeles, and Europe. He first met Zoran, the subject of his piece this month, twelve years ago as an editor at *WWD*. "The designer," he says, "remains as refreshingly obdurate and perverse as ever."

Joan Juliet Buck profiles artists and writers for *V.F.* The author of the novels *The Only Place to Be* and *Daughter of the Swan*, she is at work on a third book.

Dominick Dunne, the author of several best-selling novels and collections of nonfiction, was one of 1991's Literary Lions at the New York Public Library. His second collection of *V.F.* pieces, *The Mansions of Limbo*, is out from Crown.

Lynn Hirschberg covers the business of Hollywood and the media for *V.F.* "At forty-six," she says of Goldie Hawn, her subject this month, "she is working more now than she ever has in the past. I found that interesting."

Miriam Horn is a senior editor at *U.S. News & World Report* and has contributed to *The New Republic*, *Graphis*, and *Smithsonian*. "Having lived in both the natural canyons of the West and the man-made canyons of Manhattan," she says of her piece in this issue, "I had long been intrigued by the schizophrenia of Antoine Predock's architecture, by its mixture of pastoral purity and urban raunch."

Edward Klein frequently covers the media for *V.F.* He is writing a book about the hunt for the kidnapper of Etan Patz. "What struck me most about the Robert Maxwell story," he says of this month's piece, "was not the financial collapse of his empire, but the effect his death had on those he left behind—his wife and children, who knew so little about the man who created their privileged life."

Ron Rosenbaum's *Travels with Dr. Death and Other Unusual Investigations* is out from Viking Penguin.

Kevin Sessums, *V.F.*'s Fanfair editor, profiles entertainment figures. He is writing a novel, *Porterhouse*, to be published by Random House.

Mark Stevens frequently covers art for *V.F.* He is at work on a biography of Willem de Kooning.

James Wolcott has written for *Harper's*, *The New Republic*, and the London *Observer*.

Edward Klein on the aftermath of Robert Maxwell's death, page 180.

Ben Brantley on the cult of minimalist designer Zoran, page 202.

Joan Juliet Buck on the life of Russian émigré Tatiana Liberman, page 190.

Peter J. Boyer on the uncertain future of Mike Tyson, page 162.

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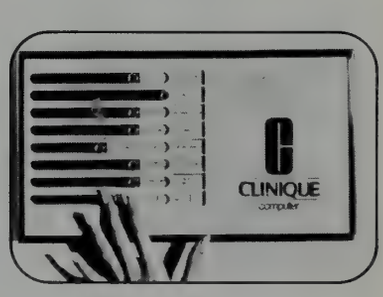

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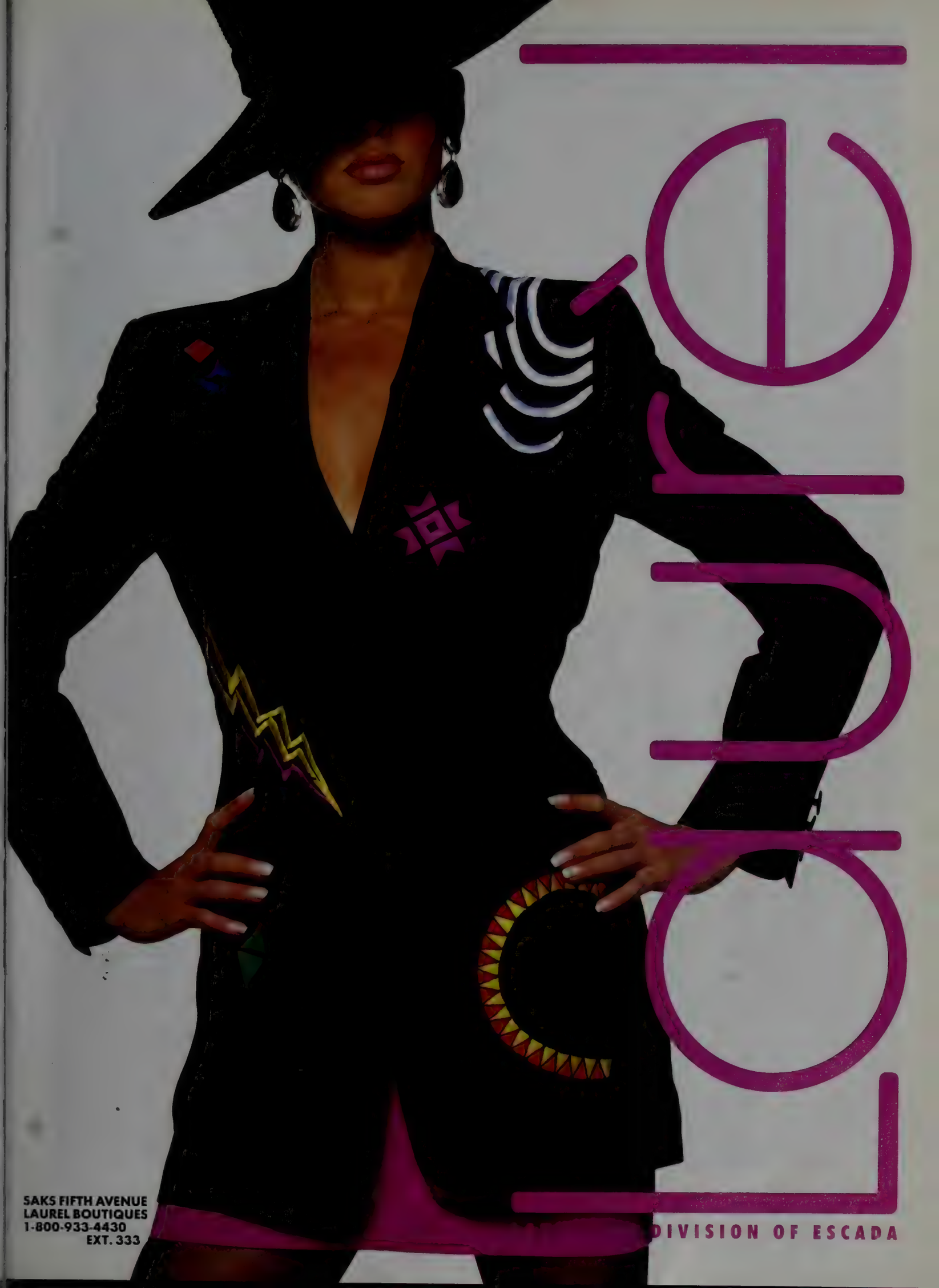
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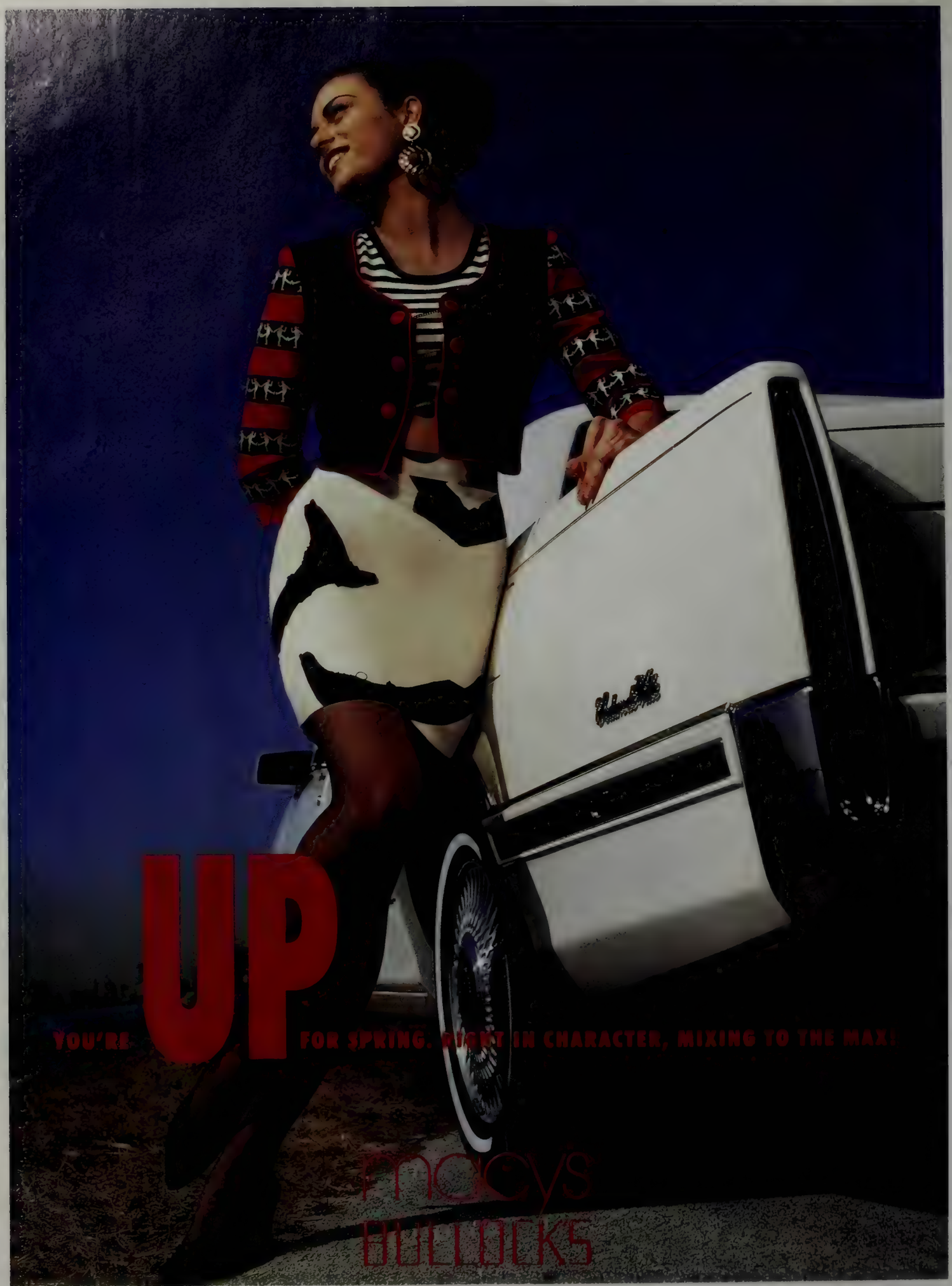

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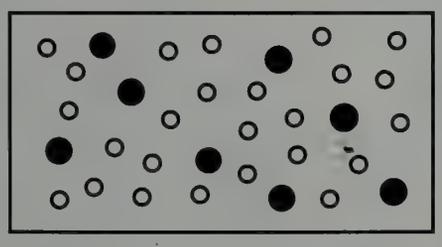

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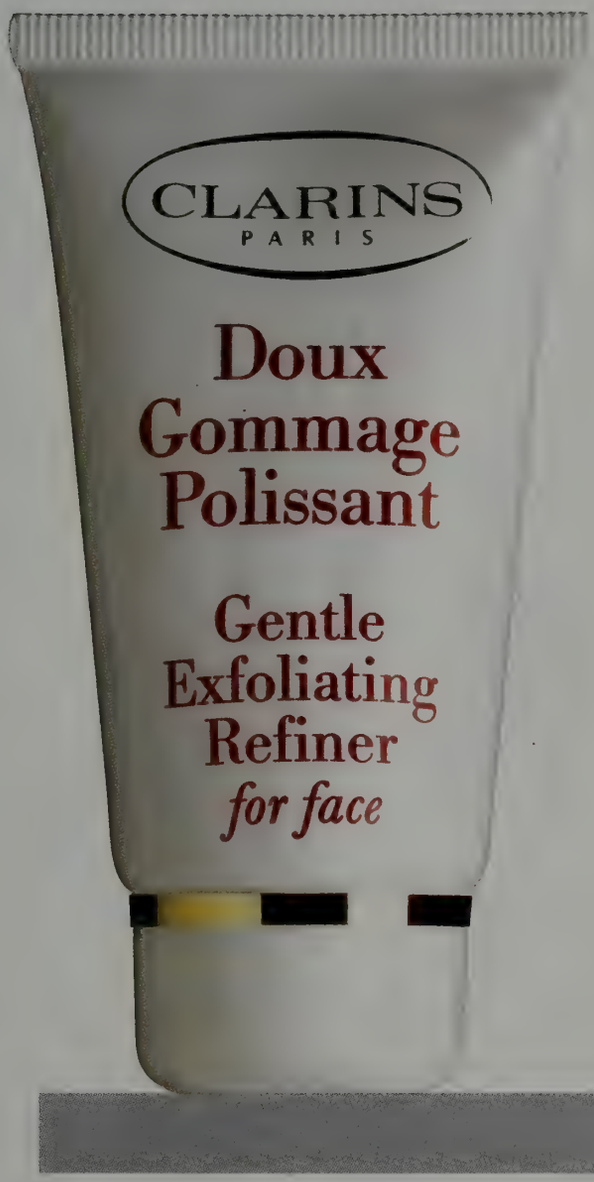

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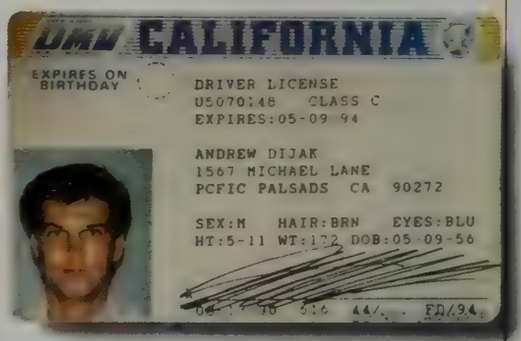
THE LAW VIEWS DRIVING AS A PRIVILEGE. BMW PREFERS TO VIEW IT AS A SKILL.

In Germany, before you'd be allowed to get behind the wheel of a car like the new BMW 325i sedan, you'd first have to do a little bit of homework.



▲At BMW, we believe that driving requires more than just a license; it requires skill. Something that a BMW, any BMW, can make the most of.

Twenty to thirty regular driving lessons, ten special driving lessons—5 on a country road, 3 on the autobahn and 2 at night. Plus twelve driving theory lessons. At a total cost of well over 1,000 American dollars.

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Needless to say, in a country where there are highways that have no speed limits, they take the skill of driving seriously.

Perhaps that's why at BMW, we design our cars not simply to make the most horsepower or the most luxury, but to make the most of the driver's skill.

So while other automakers might begin the design of a new car with the proverbial clean sheet of paper, the engineers who designed the new BMW 3-Series started the process with something decidedly more important. The driver.

THE HUMAN COMPONENT IS THE COMPONENT THAT MATTERS MOST.

Before any automotive component was designed, the operation of human components such as the eyes, the ears, the hands, even the feet and legs were taken into account.

The result is an automobile that acts not as a separate entity, but rather, as an extension of the driver's will.

Take the 325i's rear suspension, for example.

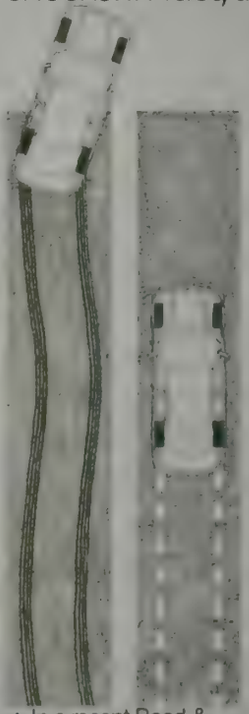
A design so unique it's been patented, this multi-link system increases straight-line and lane-change stability and reduces both squat and dive, while still maintaining the perfect ride-quality balance. A ride that's not so harsh as to be uncomfortable, but not so soft as to insulate the driver from the road. A BMW feature that, when combined with speed-sensitive power steering and antilock brakes, translates into better "feel" for the pavement traveling beneath the tires.

Which in turn translates to better control.

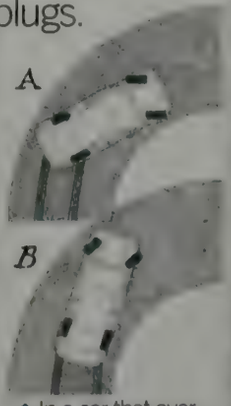
Which in turn leads us to the 325i's engine.

PERFORMANCE AND LOW MAINTENANCE. YOU REALLY CAN HAVE THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS.

Perhaps one of today's few real-world examples of better living through science, the newest BMW engine features 24 valves that require no adjustments during scheduled service checks. In fact, the 189-hp M50 engine needs almost no regular maintenance beyond the routine changing of oil, filters and spark plugs.



▲In a recent Road & Track test, a BMW 535i stopped a full 10 to 40 feet shorter than any of the other sedans tested. The new 325i, of course, employs the latest-generation BMW antilock brakes, providing for control even in emergency braking situations.



▲In a car that oversteers (A), the rear tires have a tendency to slide out of control when taking a turn. BMW's are engineered with a slight understeer (B). This provides for a turning characteristic that is easier to control.

*See your BMW dealer for details on this limited warranty. **Services provided by Cross Country Motor Club, Inc., Boston, MA 02155, except in CA, where services are provided by Cross Country Motor Club of Calif., Inc., Boston, MA

▲ Beneath the aerodynamic skin of the new BMW 325i, one can find the very latest in automotive technology and engineering. Technology not simply for the sake of technology, but technology for the sake of the one automotive component BMW engineers steadfastly refuse to design into obsolescence. The driver.

Additionally, an advanced diagnostic system has been incorporated to allow the BMW technician to "play back" past engine events, making it easy to pinpoint problems that could otherwise be difficult to detect.

But what you will truly find confidence-inspiring about this engine is that its economy of maintenance hasn't resulted in an equal economy of horsepower.

Press your right foot down. The words "low maintenance" definitely will not be the ones that come to mind.

THE 325i IMPACT-ACTIVATED SAFETY SYSTEM.

Our engineers have long contended that high-performance automobiles designed around the driver's needs are, by their very definition, the safest cars as well. And the BMW 325i provides most compelling proof.

Unfortunately, not everyone on the road is driving a BMW. And in the event of an unavoidable accident, the 3-Series is quite ready to respond — by automatically launching an entire sequence of events designed to minimize any potential injuries.

▲ A unique, patented design, the 325i's multi-link rear suspension increases straight-line and lane-change stability and reduces both squat and dive, while maintaining the perfect ride-quality balance.

Hydraulic bumpers absorb a portion of the impact, as do the BMW "crush tubes" they're attached to. Safety belts tighten their grip. Three sensors trigger the driver's-side airbag.

The BMW 325i sedan is engineered to offer you substantial financial protection as well.

Like all BMW's, the 325i is covered by our 4-year/50,000-mile bumper-to-bumper warranty* to reduce the risk of unexpected expenses, as well as a nationwide Roadside Assistance program you can call upon 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, from anywhere in the United States.**

For the location of the authorized BMW dealer nearest you, call 800-334-4BMW.

Because if you agree that driving is not simply a necessity, but rather a skill that should be taken seriously, you should test drive the car that takes the driver seriously.

The BMW 325i.

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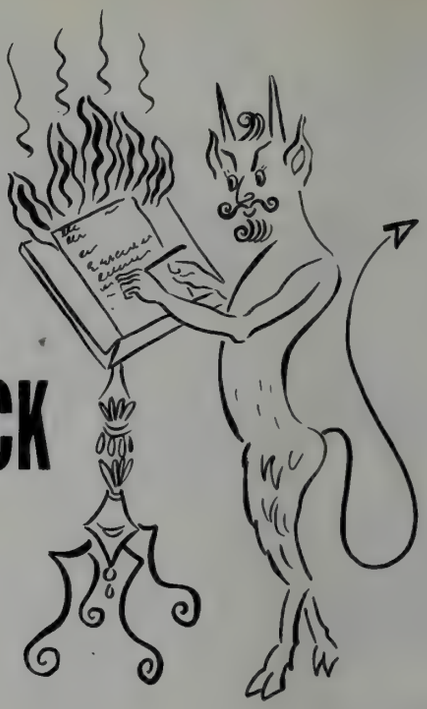
LAURA ASHLEY

Reflections of Love

READERS BITE BACK



Final Exit

Thank you for Cal McCrystal's "Ann Humphry's Final Exit" [January]. It scared the bejesus out of me! As a person with a severe though not terminal or painful disability, I have long had misgivings about the right-to-die movement, which seemed to belie my otherwise liberal leanings. Now I am more certain than ever that this is frightening stuff.

BEN MATTLIN
Los Angeles, California

Neither the National Hemlock Society nor the death-with-dignity campaign will be sabotaged by malicious accusations against Derek Humphry. His voice is but one among many that say physician-assisted suicide is a compassionate alternative when life holds only incurable illness, pain, and desperation.

STEPHANIE M. THOMAS
Bloomington, Indiana

Having even to *respond* to Derek Humphry's claims of my mother's "mental illness" is both humiliating and insulting. Anyone who knew Ann Wickett realizes how courageous and sensible she was, and how preposterous such claims are. And no one better than Humphry himself. Death for Humphry's Hemlock Society is strictly business, and to him his wife simply became bad business, to be discarded. What he did to my mother disgusts me. To top it off, he had no qualms about printing a eulogy in *The New York Times*, then later openly admitting its purpose was "damage control."

ROBERT W. STONE
Toronto, Ontario

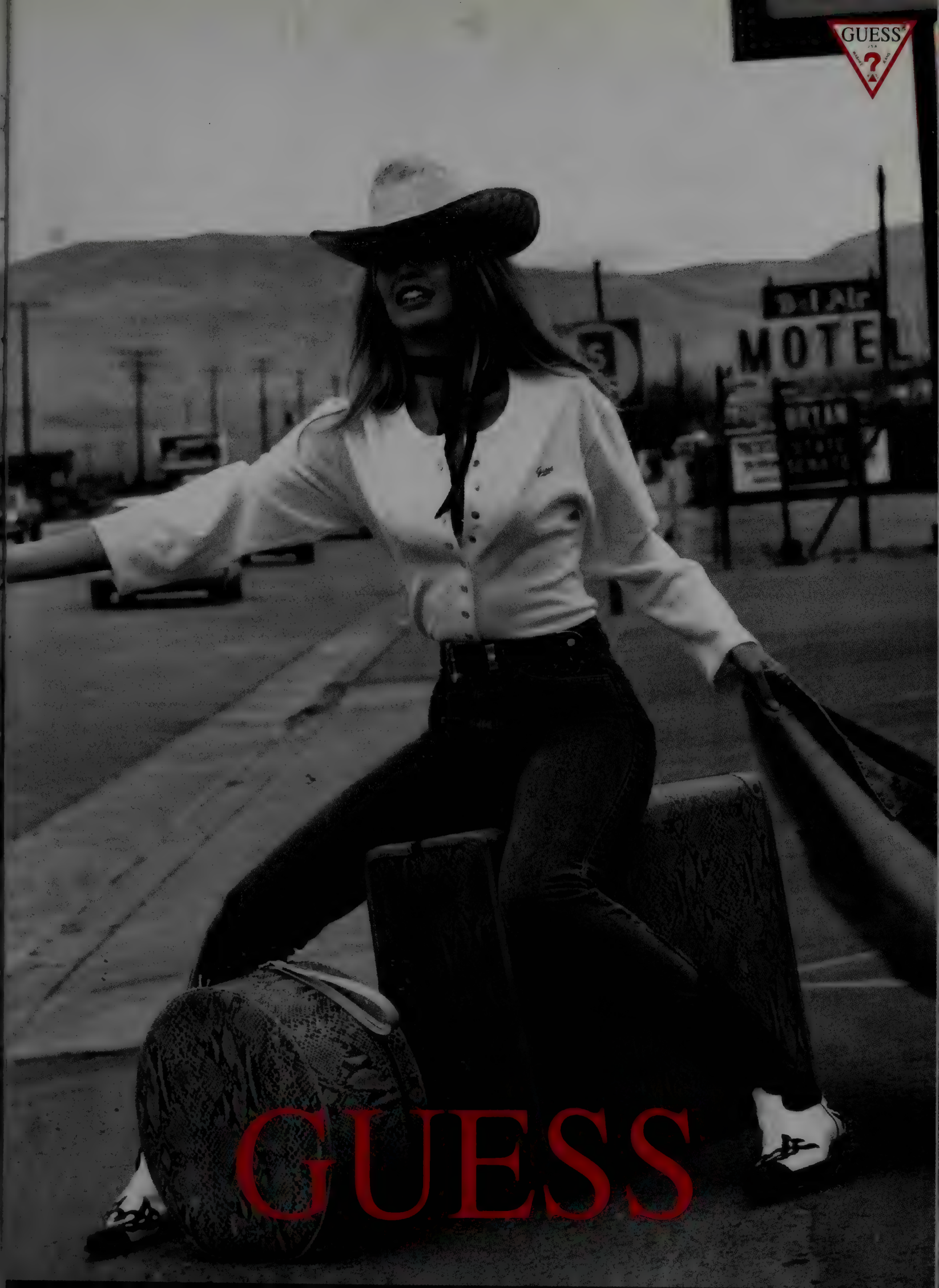
Beautiful, bright Ann Wickett! How few women, from their graves, can rally their husbands' enemies and get them to attempt to undo their life's work. Cal McCrystal describes Humphry as dour and dull, characteristics hard to understand for those who have worked with him—a man so capable of global vision, great tolerance, and quick decisions. It is easy to see why lesser folk could be eaten up with envy.

Ann's book *Double Exit* reflects the sad, mixed-up, depressed personality she took little trouble to hide. Did Humphry help her? He made it possible to publish the book and co-founded the Hemlock Society with her. Poor Ann. It sounds as though her thinking developed a strong paranoid tinge, supported by her friends from the anti-euthanasia movement. Did her vituperative last pronouncements destroy the Hemlock Society? Hardly. The right to die is a right desperately wanted by a growing number of thoughtful citizens.

NAN BILLINGS, Florida Director
National Hemlock Society
Sarasota, Florida

Ann Humphry was my mother's cousin, and my brother J.K. and I knew and loved Ann for many years. The last time I met Derek was when I arrived at Windfall Farm in Oregon to spend a week's vacation, the very day Ann was told she had breast cancer. Ann had violent outbursts that week, which I attributed to the shock of the news. I saw Derek at times brooding quietly by himself. But he went to great lengths to create the impression that he was going to be there to help Ann cope and that he was genuinely concerned *(Continued on page 38)*

FEDERICO BOTANA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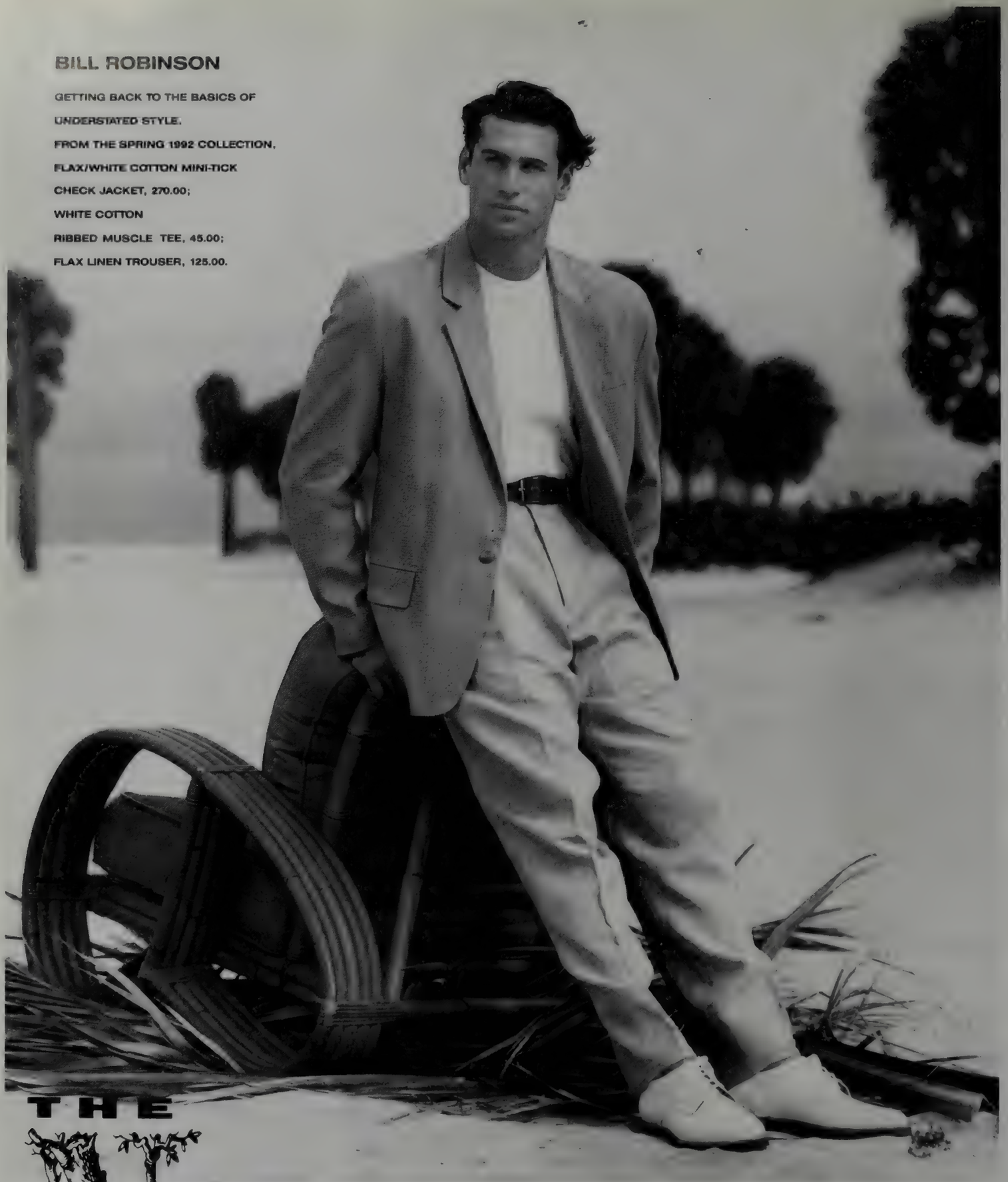

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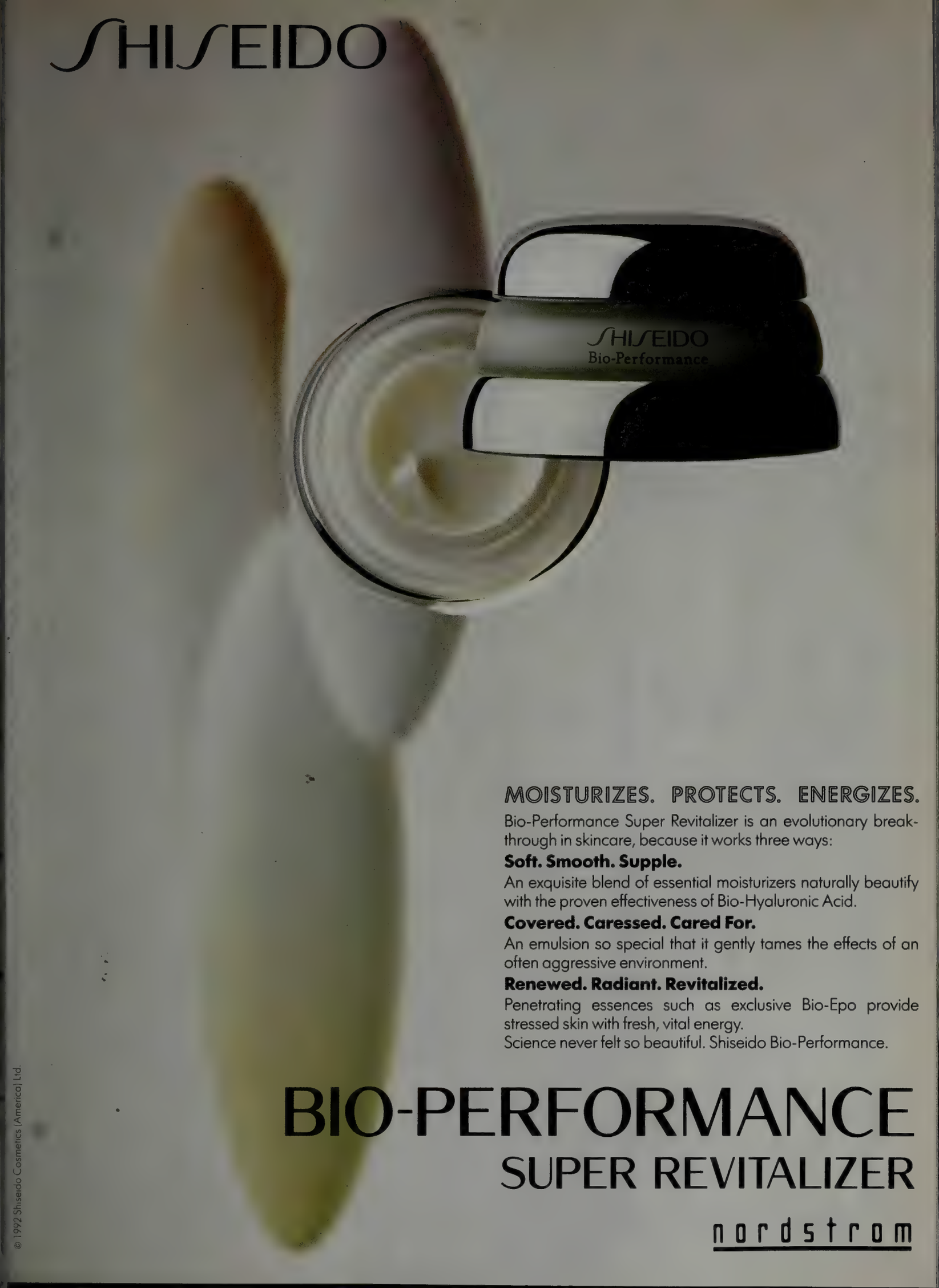

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(Continued from page 32) about her welfare. A mere two weeks after I left the farm, I learned with shock, horror, and dismay that Derek had left the infamous message on the answering machine that he was leaving Ann and that their thirteen-year marriage was over. It was with disgust that I learned that the farm woman who had arrived at the farm several times while I was there was the woman who later became his third bride.

NITA McKNIGHT
Royal Palm Beach, Florida

I have known Derek Humphry for twelve years, and also knew his ex-wife Ann, who always seemed to me emotionally unstable. There is a lot of evidence that she was, e.g., her suicide and dramatic claim that she was dying after her lumpectomy, even though she was found to be cancer-free. As for Derek, for twelve years he has worked tirelessly for a cause that could not have been more unpopular at the beginning. Now he is being vilified—in part because of his wife's wild accusations, in part, I think, because his book sold so many copies and people are envious. Derek's wife, too, couldn't bear her ex-husband's success or his remarriage. The final blow, as she admitted herself, was her lawyers' refusal to pursue a suit against Derek. Suicides are sometimes called acts of rage. Ann Wickett tried to bring her husband down, and with him, selfishly, his cause.

BETTY ROLLIN
New York, New York

In spite of the fact that Derek Humphry was neither polite nor professional enough to ask for permission, I was flattered to discover an excerpt from one of my articles reprinted (out of context) in *Final Exit*. But soon my phone began to ring, and flattery turned to discontent. Callers assume I am either a local Hemlock Society franchisee or an East Coast Kevorkian suicide-machine distributor. I am neither. Of all the articles I have read on this subject, Cal McCrystal's gave me the best insight into the insensitive, egocentric behavior of Hemlock's cofounder. I now understand why he was neither polite nor professional enough to ask for permission.

JOSEPH J. NEUSCHATZ, M.D.
Port Jefferson, New York

Cal McCrystal quotes me as saying about *Jean's Way*, "It's the most tasteless thing I've ever read in my life. But it will make a fortune." McCrystal was careful to say "reportedly said," an old journalistic trick. I didn't say it. For the record, I didn't see *Jean's Way* until after it was published. I wasn't an agent then and didn't represent Humphry or Wickett at the time. McCrystal and I were both working for the London *Sunday Times*, as was Humphry.

I have always supported the right to self-deliverance for the terminally ill.

ROBERT I. DUCAS
New York, New York

CAL McCRYSTAL REPLIES:
My source, a former colleague of Ducas and myself, insists that the words were spoken, in his presence and within earshot of another colleague, while Ducas was holding a manuscript copy of Jean's Way. *However, Ducas is correct in saying that the remarks attributed to him were made before he became Humphry's agent.*

All About Steve

The picture of Steve Ross in Richard M. Clurman's "Just Call Him Steve" [January] bore no resemblance to the Steve Ross I and many others have come to know. Ross is a man of tremendous heart, great generosity, and abiding human kindness. In a time when many people are too busy to pay attention to the needs of others, Steve Ross has never hesitated to take whatever time and effort might be necessary to help a friend or a family, or even an acquaintance, in need.

More than just a fine human being, Steve Ross has been an outstanding citizen of our city. Over the years, he and the companies he has helped build have contributed tens of millions of dollars to support New York institutions, including our parks, libraries, and cultural facilities. Just in the last two years, Ross worked together with Jonathan Tisch and others to bring the prestigious and lucrative Grammy Awards back to New York. And, perhaps most important, at a time when many other large companies are deserting our city, Ross and Time Warner have kept faith with us, and have continued to employ more than seven thousand people.

The Steve Ross I know is a unique human being, a great New Yorker, and a visionary business leader. It is too bad your readers missed out on learning that about him.

ANDREW J. STEIN, President
The New York City Council
New York, New York

(Continued on page 46)

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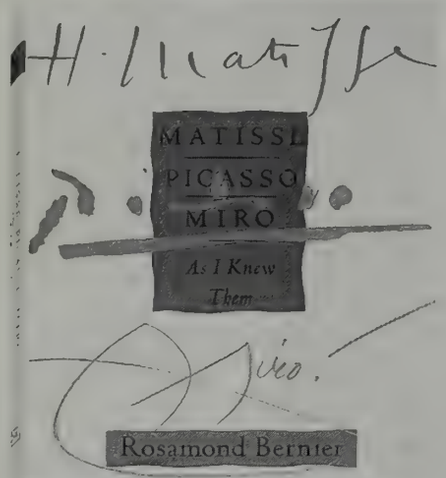

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Letters

(Continued from page 38)

Ms. Understanding

[Regarding "Deconstructing Gloria," by Leslie Bennetts, January:] In the context of questions about the sale of *Ms.* magazine in 1987, I answered what I heard as a query about whether or not Mortimer Zuckerman had offered to save *Ms.* from sale. Since he had been among those urging a sale, I answered no. As the query was paraphrased in print, however, it was about "help." In fact, he had earlier been one of those who made contributions to the educational foundation that owned *Ms.* and also co-signed bank loans (the last of which was repaid with interest by the foundation with proceeds from *Ms.*'s sale). He also assigned his staff to give us advice.

GLORIA STEINEM
New York, New York

LESLIE BENNETTS REPLIES:
Gloria Steinem was quoted as indicating that Mortimer Zuckerman had failed to help Ms. *magazine when it was struggling for survival. Mr. Zuckerman has informed* Vanity Fair *that Ms. Steinem's statement was incorrect and that he donated a total of $406,151 to the Ms. Foundation for Women and the Ms. Foundation for Education and Communication (which operated* Ms. *magazine) in seven different contributions of varying amounts between 1984 and 1990. Mr. Zuckerman also guaranteed three separate bank loans worth a total of $995,000—all were eventually repaid with interest by* Ms.*—and guaranteed a printing contract and paper supplies. In addition he assigned his most senior executives to consult with* Ms. *and advise the magazine on its financial problems. In her December 11 letter to* Vanity Fair, *Ms. Steinem places our discussion about* Ms. *magazine "in the context of questions about the sale" of the magazine, but this was not the case. I asked her whether or not Mr. Zuckerman's financial assets were part of his appeal for her. She replied that they were a factor, not so much because she was personally interested in his money but because she hoped he might use it to help* Ms. *magazine, among other causes. I then asked whether Mr. Zuckerman had done so. "No," she replied. Contrary to what Ms. Steinem says in her letter, and as my notes show, the query was indeed about helping the magazine, not about saving it. I regret that Ms. Steinem's assertion was incorrect.*

Leaks Vinaigrette

I found Ann Louise Bardach's "Nina Totenberg: Queen of the Leaks" [January] intriguing and enlightening. The NPR "troika"—actually, the troika plus one, Lesley Stahl—are for my money the best reporter-commentators Washington has had. Bardach's description of the troika's voices is right on target, but why call them divas? References to their sex are not necessary; these women are quite simply the best. And if Totenberg told Alan Simpson to "shut the fuck up," she certainly wasn't the only one. As I watched Simpson during Hill's testimony, that was among the kinder comments I screamed at the Magnavox.

EUGENE FOX JR.
Texarkana, Texas

It is now clear that there were two heroines in the Clarence Thomas confirmation process: Anita Hill and Nina Totenberg.

LISA A. MILLER
West Palm Beach, Florida

Clio Patter

Regarding "Bill Evans's Twilight Zone," by Trip Gabriel [January]: As the new owner of the annual Clio Awards, I'd like to assure people that the future of the Clios is definite, bright, and secure. The awards will be presented on September 14 (a date reserved pending approval) at the New York State Theater at Lincoln Center, where the show has taken place since 1985.

RUTH L. RATNY
Chicago, Illinois

Q. and A.

In answer to Lili Fini Zanuck's question "Who *doesn't* want to direct?" ["Manic Zanuck," by Lynn Hirschberg, January], I'd like to put myself forward as someone who has no interest in performing that function. And I am not alone. There are small pockets of us around the country, and our number is growing.

BRUCE JAY FRIEDMAN
Water Mill, New York

Letters to the editor should be sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to: The Editor, Vanity Fair, 350 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10017. The letters chosen for publication may be edited for length and clarity.

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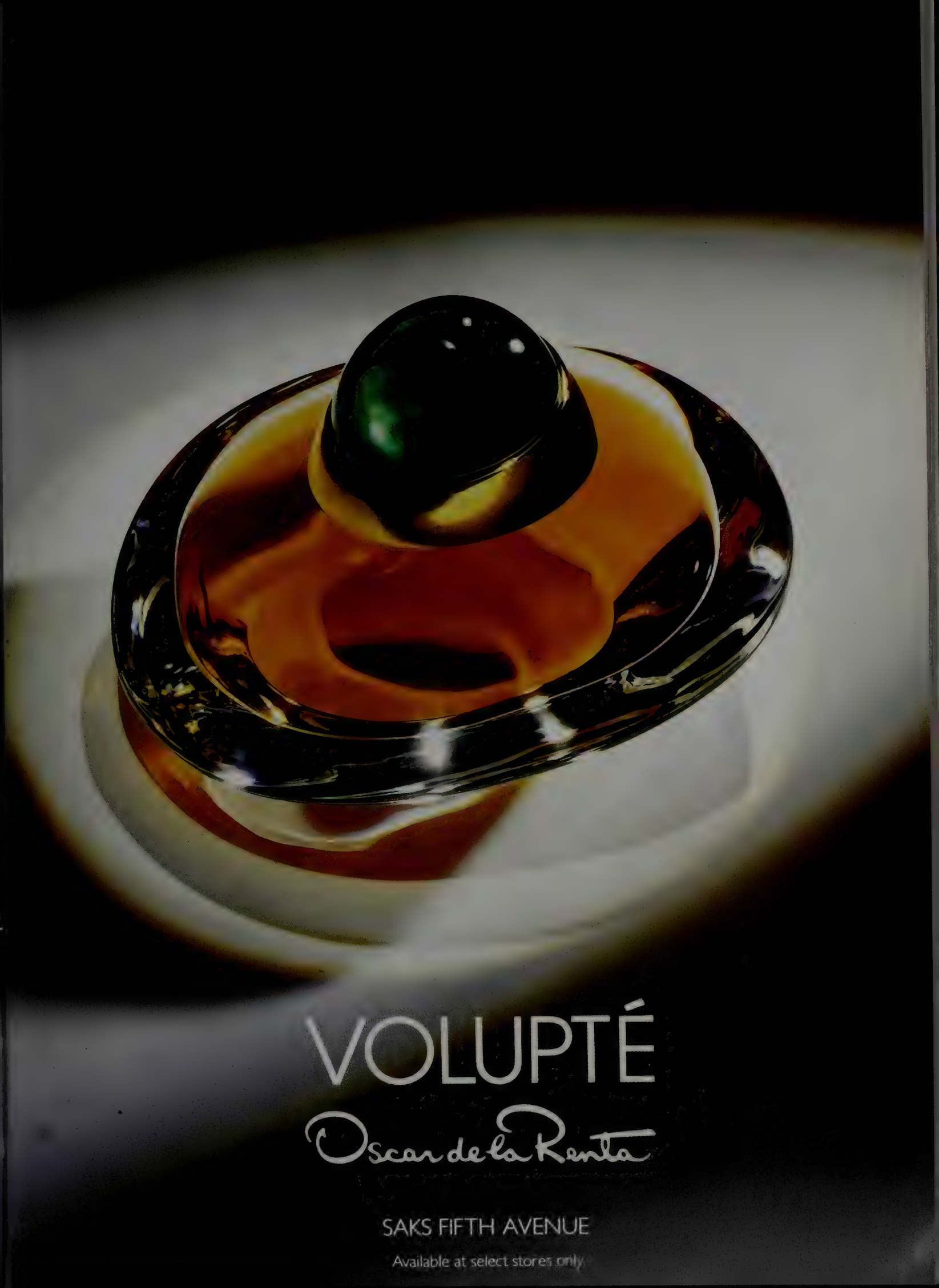
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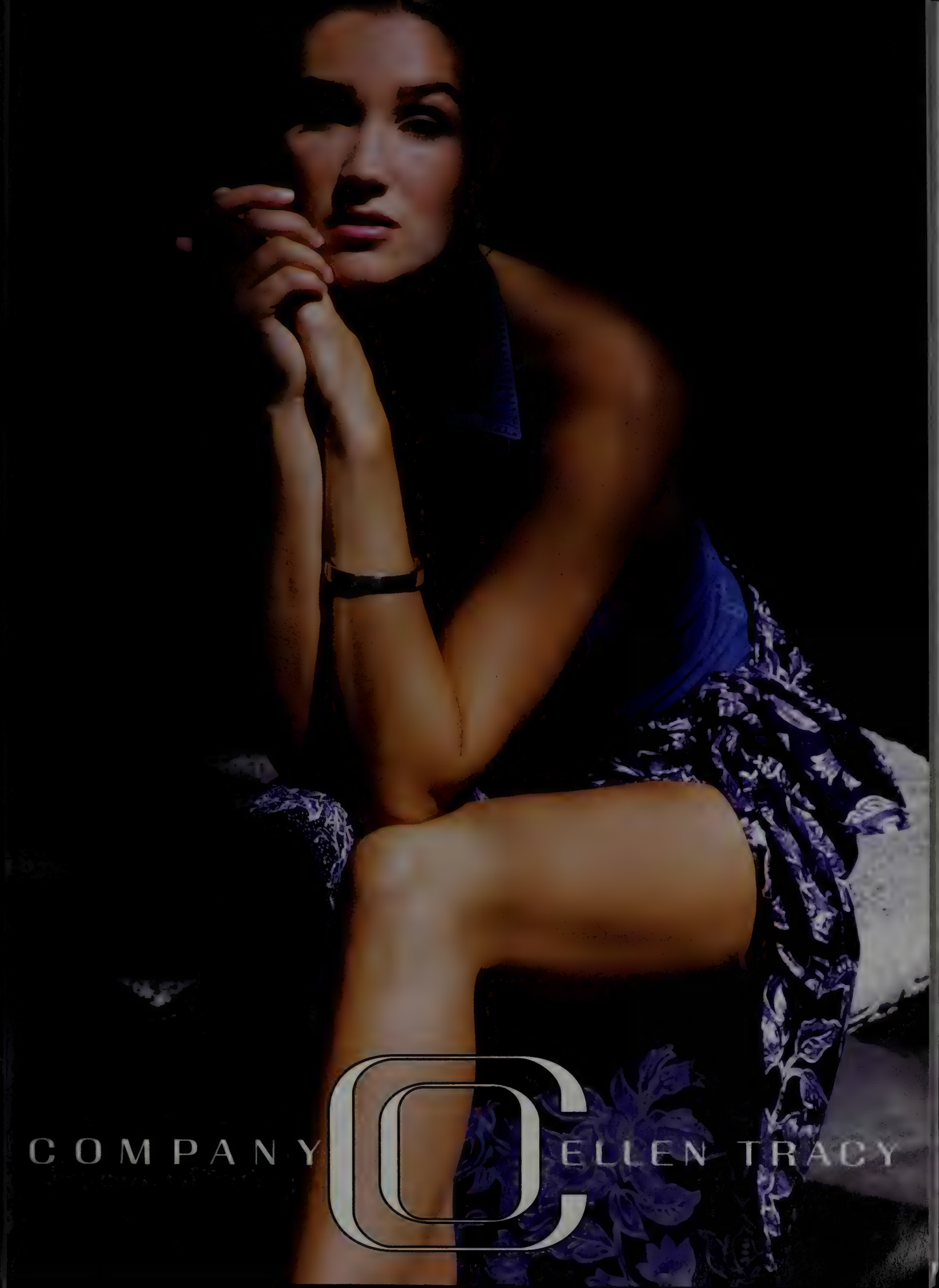
COMPANY C ELLEN TRACY

THE MOST HATED LAWYER IN AMERICA

What drives William Kunstler to stir up outrage—and headlines—by championing such controversial clients as Malcolm X, El Sayyid Nosair, John Gotti, and Heavy D.?

BY RON ROSENBAUM

The lawyer of last resort and Yusef Salaam's mother, Sharonne: Kunstler insists black defendants be looked upon not as perpetrators of crimes but as victims of the larger crime of white racism.

It's a quiet Sunday morning in the nearly deserted Greenwich Village town house of attorney William Kunstler. In the stillness, the answering machine clicks on and there's a quiet woman's voice speaking, calmly, patiently outlining for the absent attorney her hopes for his future.

"*I hope your children die. I want to see you die. I want to see your family die. But most of all I want to see your children die and I want you to see it. You're an evil, evil man to do what you've done.*"

What Kunstler has done is win a jury verdict the morning papers are calling "stunning," "shocking," an "impossible victory." Just twelve hours ago a Manhattan jury pronounced Kunstler's client El Sayyid Nosair, the accused assassin of Rabbi Meir Kahane, "Not guilty" on murder charges, provoking a shouting, screaming near riot in the courtroom by outraged Kahane supporters. And this deadly-quiet call this morning.

Kunstler was only one of a team of three attorneys who produced the astonishing "impossible victory" in the Nosair trial. But Kunstler was the only Jew, and from the beginning his gung ho defense of an accused rabbi-killer has brought him bitter vituperation from Kahane supporters who have called him a "traitor to his religion." It started with shouts and insults during the pre-trial hearings, escalated to angry jostling in the courthouse elevator and death threats over the phone. Then the living-room windows of Kunstler's town house were shattered by paint bullets. And at a defense-team press conference an altercation with Kahane supporters turned ugly and dangerous when some of them rushed toward Kunstler. His bodyguard drew a 9-mm. semi-automatic weapon and looked ready to sweep the room with gunfire.

But all that was before last night's verdict. There's something new about this morning's phone message. Something different in this eerily calm litany of death wishes for Kunstler and his family: a pure, distilled hatred that is chilling, cobra-like, truly frightening.

Of course Kunstler's no stranger to the varieties of hatred, hot and cold. He conjures with them almost like a snake-handling preacher whipping a rattler around so fast it can't strike him.

Consider his remarks last year when he announced he was taking on the defense of Kevin McKiever, the homeless black crack smoker charged with the brutal knifing murder of a pretty, upwardly mobile young white woman on a tony block off Manhattan's Central Park West. Kunstler had been asked by a special state judicial panel to represent McKiever. Kunstler told the press that he'd been urged by friends and family, even his wife, Margaret Ratner (a politically committed attorney herself), to turn down the assignment because it was too ugly, too inflamed—didn't he have enough hate on his plate already?

That, Kunstler proclaimed, was exactly why he was doing it. His client, Kunstler said—practically boasted—was "*the most hated man in New York.*" And it's precisely such objects of public fury who need a lawyer willing to shield them from the passion and prejudice unleashed against them.

If Kunstler's client is the most hated man in New York, he's been assigned the perfect advocate: thirty years of explosive theatrics in the courtroom, strident sound bites on the courthouse steps,

JONATHAN BECKER

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defense of Public Enemies, an instinct for publicity like a heat-seeking missile have made Bill Kunstler—however beloved by the many he's fought for—easily the most hated lawyer in America.

I'd followed Kunstler's trials over the years, once covered him when he was put on trial himself—for the multiple contempt-of-court citations handed down against him in the bitter Chicago Seven conspiracy trial, which first brought him to national attention in 1969. I remembered when Kunstler was known more as a press-conference lawyer than a courtroom genius, when his confrontational "political trial" strategy was a bit of a joke among some movement types. "Kunstler," they'd say, "is the only lawyer who can get you the death penalty for a traffic ticket." (Still, he'd make you famous before you fried.)

But over the past decade, I'd been impressed by the way he'd begun to win one surprising against-the-odds, impossible victory after another in highly publicized cases he militantly politicized, often using—as he did in the Nosair case—wildly conjectural conspiracy theories backed by dubious—or no—evidence. In the Nosair case, for instance, Kunstler proclaimed in his opening argument that the defense would prove that a conspiracy of Jews—factional enemies within the Jewish Defense League—murdered Kahane. The judge refused to allow the scant evidence Kunstler had to back this up into the case, calling the theory "pure speculation." But the jury acquitted anyway.

Had Kunstler developed into a brilliant trial attorney or had the *Zeitgeist* of an increasingly skeptical, conspiracy-obsessed age (see *JFK*) made his conspiracy-theory defenses seem more plausible to juries?

And what about all that hatred? It seemed to me that there has to be something more than ideology that makes him so blithely impervious to it, something deeply personal that feeds on the loathing he loves to stir up.

How do they loathe him? Let us count the (latest) ways: Just last month, in the frenzied aftermath of the City College of New York (C.C.N.Y.) "human stampede" tragedy, Kunstler appeared at a contentious press conference defending his client Heavy D., and Puff Daddy, the promoters who were targets of massive media outrage—and blamed the police and "racism" for the whole debacle. Which led *New York Post* columnist Mike McAlary to this disgusted response: "It is [the] unspeakable lawyer William Kunstler who, with nine black lives lost, would have us believe his client is some kind of civil-rights hero."

Flag-loving patriots all over America revile Kunstler's name for his stunning 1989 Supreme Court victory on behalf of a flag-burning member of the Revolutionary Communist Party, the case in which Kunstler convinced the High Court that burning the Stars and Stripes was "free speech" protected by the First Amendment.

As one of the white officers was delivering a vicious kick in the ribs, he told Kunstler, "*This is for Larry Davis.*"

Prison officials everywhere are still bitter about his role in the bloody Attica prison uprising twenty years ago. And on the eve of the big John Gotti trial, Kunstler gave federal Mob busters fits by charging into the case, arguing the Don's appeal of the ruling that ejected his lawyer of choice, Bruce Cutler.

Lawmen all over New York already hate him for his smear-the-police defense of cop-shooter outlaw Larry Davis. And sometimes it's not just abstract hostility. Consider the uniformed court officers who expressed their feelings about Kunstler by brutally beating and kicking him in a courtroom mêlée that broke out in the midst of a hearing in which he was representing Tawana Brawley adviser C. Vernon Mason. "I got a broken rib and all the cartilage in my knee had to be removed, big operation," Kunstler told me. As one of the white officers was delivering a vicious kick in the ribs, Kunstler says, "he told me, '*This is for Larry Davis*.' "

Larry Davis. He's the source of much of the contemporary Kunstler hatred. The 1988 Davis cases are what brought Kunstler back into the front ranks of controversial, headline-provoking (some would say headline-grabbing) lawyers. After a relative lull in the career of the man who was for a long time the paradigmatic sixties-icon radical lawyer, who made his reputation and made history defending Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Black Panthers, the Chicago Seven, Attica prisoners, American Indian Movement leaders—who *played* the quintessential radical lawyer in Oliver Stone's *The Doors*—the Larry Davis trials brought Kunstler back into the limelight, reminded a lot of people why they hated him in the first place.

Davis, a confessed hard-drug dealer, was the object of a marathon manhunt that captivated the tabloids for weeks in the mid-eighties. Wanted for the execution-murder of four rival dealers, Davis was cornered in a Bronx apartment by a huge police SWAT team but managed to blast his way out, shooting up six cops in the process.

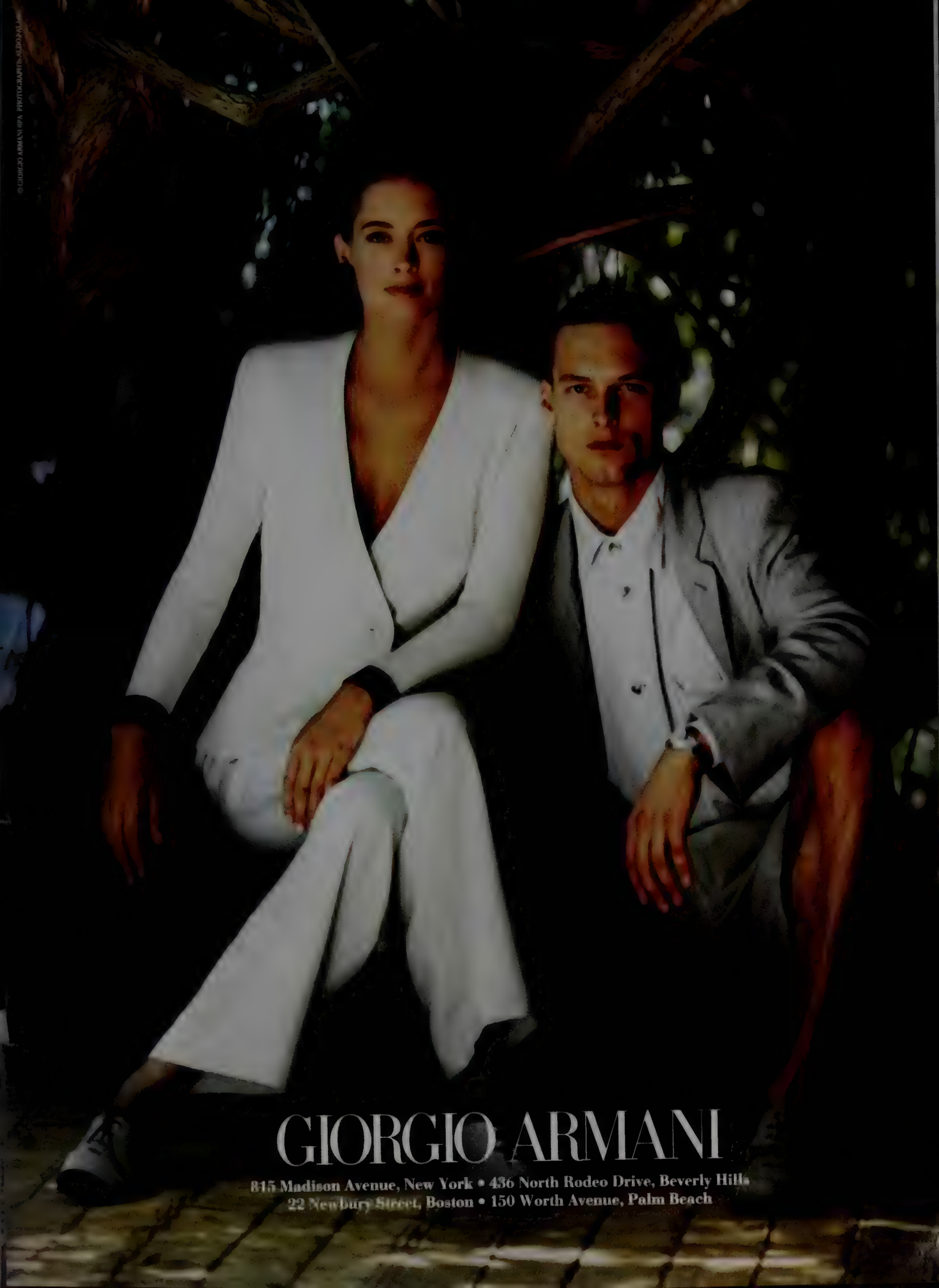
By the time he was finally captured he'd become a kind of folk hero among some sectors of the black community and the number-one target of the criminal-justice system in New York City. But Kunstler put on a brilliant offensive defense. On the basis of some slender, problematic bits of evidence and ferocious cross-examination of the cop witnesses, he got Davis acquittals on the murder and cop-shooting charges by arguing that Davis was actually a *victim* of the cops he shot: that he'd been trying to blow the whistle on a ring of corrupt, drug-dealing cops who had been using him and conspired to assassinate him when he tried to go straight. Shooting cops was a legitimate act of self-defense against this assassination plot, Kunstler insisted.

And then, having gotten juries to buy this story, to top it off, to rub salt in the wounds, surely to buff up his prized status as Most Hated, he made the incendiary statement (to *The Village Voice*) that "any black guy that shoots six cops and puts the fear of God in police officers, I think is great."

Whomp! went the white officer's boot into Kunstler's rib. *This is for Larry Davis.*

And yet for Kunstler even this stomping story has a happy ending.

After the beating, Kunstler told me, he was arrested, dragged off to a cell. "They put me in a tank with all of last night's people they had poured in. Bunch of blacks and Hispanics, many of them on drugs. And I think they did that in order to get me beaten up. So I walk in and there's stony silence. Here I am, this elderly honkie, you know, and every seat's taken. Some guy says, 'No seat for you, Pops.' And so finally I said, 'Well, I'm Larry Davis's lawyer.' And the moment I said that, it was magic. Sheer magic. And one kid says, 'Leroy,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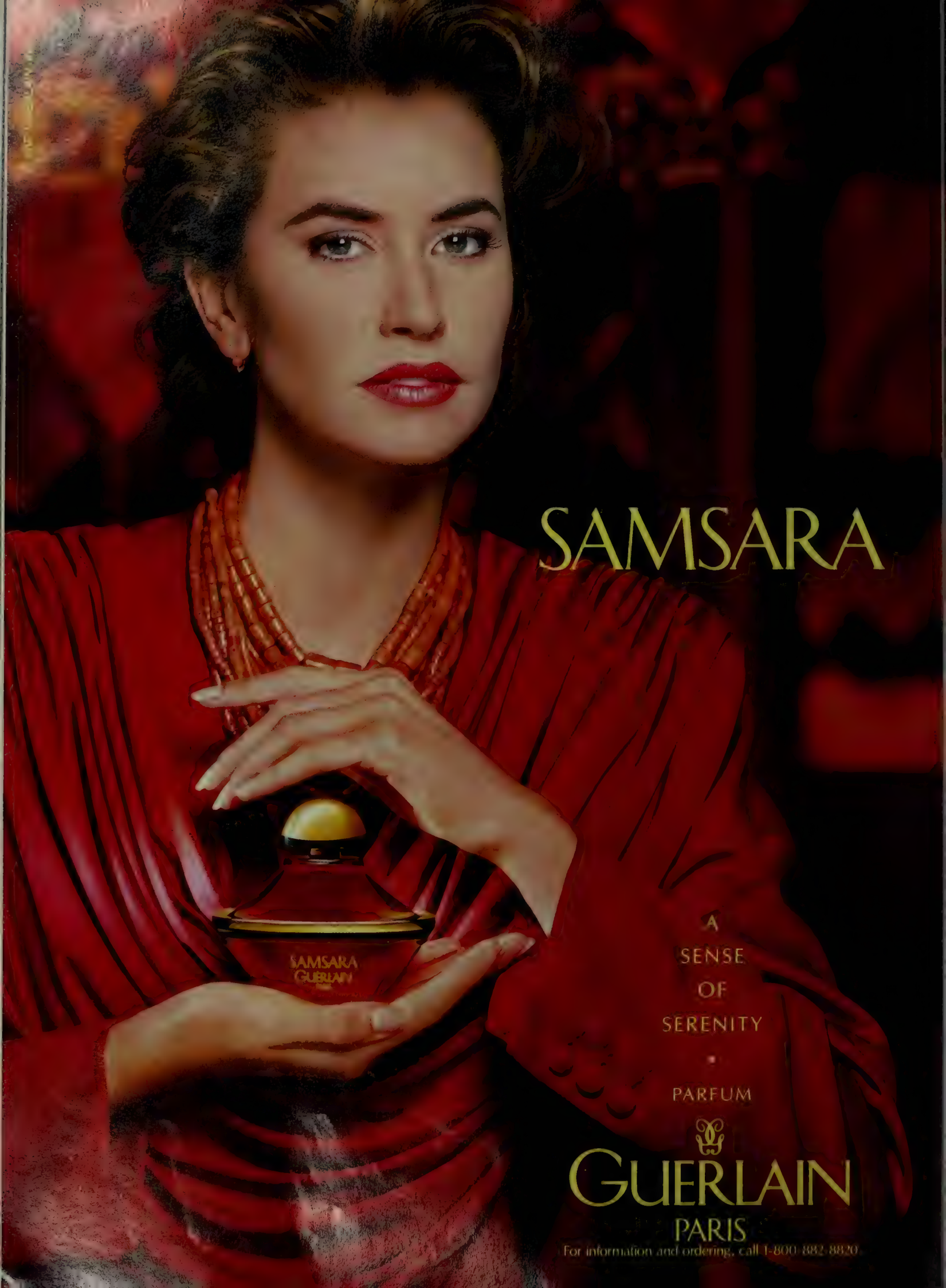
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get up and give the counselor a seat.' ''

Give the counselor a seat. For Bill Kunstler no tribute from the highest reaches of the criminal-justice system could match the thrill, the magic of this show of respect from a black denizen of its lower depths. Suffering the hatred of whites earns him the redemptive love of blacks. For a moment he *was* Larry Davis.

Al Sharpton speaking, the Famous Reverend Al, talking about his buddy Bill Kunstler as the two of them get ready to blast the Powers That Be at a police-brutality press conference. In contrast to the nattily duded-up Rev with his carefully crisped curls, Kunstler looks like he slept in his suit, his nimbus of graying locks like they've never seen a comb.

They're an odd couple, but they go way back, and it's hard to think of a pair that presses more of America's hot buttons on race than these two. There's Sharpton, media manipulator, ubiquitous agitator and irritant, who pops up at every flash point from Bensonhurst to Crown Heights. And there's Kunstler, who's become a key Sharpton ally (and personal attorney at times), and who boasts of occupying a unique position of trust in New York's black community, having been a trusted defender of just about every major black leader, including Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, H. Rap Brown, Stokely Carmichael, the Black Panther Party leadership, the accused cop-killers of the Black Liberation Army, and the Tawana Brawley ''family advisers.''

What brings Sharpton and Kunstler together today on the steps of a courthouse in Brooklyn is an explosive police-brutality case, one of a number of such incidents that have been detonating with escalating frequency and violence throughout this ugly season of race in New York City.

This afternoon, Sharpton and Kunstler are announcing an aggressive, if untested, legal tactic: Kunstler's filing a writ of mandamus, a little-used device to compel public officials to enforce the law. This one seeks to force a city prosecutor to reinstate murder charges against five cops originally indicted for murder in the choking death of a young Hispanic, Federico Pereira, an episode that sparked enraged protests at the time. When a new prosecutor succeeded in getting nearly all the charges against the cops dropped, the victim's embittered mother came to Bill Kunstler, lawyer of last resort.

She came to him on the recommendation of the publisher of *The New York Amsterdam News*, the Harlem-based weekly paper, for which Kunstler—one of the only regular white contributors—writes occasional sonnets on current events. Kunstler's undergraduate sonnets at Yale were once published in a slim volume of verse called *Our Pleasant Vices*. Now he turns out lines like these, on Clarence Thomas:

The President has found his Judas goat
A black man with a soul of snowy hue
Who knows just how to wear the bigot's coat
And keep the poor from their God-given due.

Kunstler's position at the *Amsterdam News* is not the only example of his unique relationship with the black community. He relishes pointing out to me that he was ''the only white honorary marshal of the Malcolm X Parade'' and that he was giving Malcolm legal advice around the time he changed his name from Malcolm Little. He was also one of the only white attorneys (or whites of any profession) to publicly back Sharpton and his fellow Brawley family advisers to the bitter end, proclaiming it ''makes no difference'' whether Brawley fabricated her rape-by-white-cops story, since ''a lot of young black women are treated the way she said she was treated.''

Reverend Sharpton: "I read where Bill Kunstler said he was the only white guy Al Sharpton liked. And I said to myself, *Kunstler's white?*"

The contentious press conference after the C.C.N.Y. tragedy: Heavy D., attorney Michael Warren, Kunstler, and Puff Daddy.

Sharpton, whatever else may be said of him, is a guy with a sly sense of humor, and he has a wickedly funny way of commenting on Kunstler's pride in his special status among blacks. Reverend Al is telling me how he and Kunstler go way back together, back to when the teenage Reverend was doubling as James Brown's personal manager and Kunstler was representing the Godfather of Soul on some radio-station deal gone sour down South. The black Reverend and the white attorney have been through thick and thin together. Bill Kunstler: the Consigliere of Soul.

Then Sharpton grins and says, ''I read in the papers where Bill Kunstler said he was the only white guy Al Sharpton liked. And I said to myself, *Kunstler's white?*''

Sharpton winks. Kunstler beams. No jury verdict could give him more satisfaction than this benediction. *Kunstler's white?* Here in this backhanded accolade is the acquittal he's been seeking all his life. Absolution from the white man's burden of racial guilt. Not guilty, on the grounds of being (for all practical purposes) not white.

This is the key to why Bill Kunstler makes people (*white* people) so uncomfortable. For some thirty years, ever since the civil-rights struggle began in the South, America has been engaged in a great national debate over race. Which is in large part a debate over white guilt: Just how much does white America owe to black America for the legacy of slavery and segregation and racism? How much guilt, what kind of expiation?

At a time when the pendulum has swung so far that it's hard to find even white liberals who will defend the idea that whites ''owe'' anything more to blacks than mere statutory equality—when even some blacks, like Clarence

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Thomas reject the idea of reparations—Bill Kunstler's stance, his work, his *life* provoke outrage, contempt, hostility, *grate* on many like the proverbial fingernails on the blackboard. Because Kunstler insists that it's not a question of whether society owes *anything* to the victims of racism. In Bill Kunstler's view we owe *everything* and, in the words of Stevie Wonder, we *haven't done nothin'*.

This is not merely an abstract belief about white guilt; it's at the heart of the passion he brings to defending his clients. And frequently the focus of his political-trial strategy: his belief that, for the most part, black defendants should be looked upon not as perpetrators of the crimes they're accused of, but as victims of the larger, ongoing crime of white racism.

Actually, "for the most part" is my own temporizing qualification. I once asked Kunstler flatly, "Do you believe *all* black defendants are victims?"

"I guess I do," he said.

Tuesday morning. The day begins with Kunstler himself facing a jail term. Practically begging for it. He's seventy-two years old and finally beginning to look his age after a recent bout with bladder cancer. But he sounds as if nothing would make him happier than getting thrown in the slammer for a month. Which is what he's up against this morning as he descends the rickety steps leading down to his cellar offices from his family living quarters in the two upper stories of the ancient town house he inhabits with his second wife and their two teenage daughters.

Ventilation in this cramped space seems not to have improved much in the century since it served as a sanctuary for fugitive slaves on the Underground Railroad to Canada and two of them died of asphyxiation down here. The tiny, low-ceilinged two-room basement "suite" that Kunstler shares with his young law partner, Ron Kuby, still has the dank air of a fugitive hideout. And in a sense it is: it's the place where the legal radicalism of the sixties and seventies, once loud and boisterous and flourishing, has gone to ground. Most of the best and brightest radical lawyers of that era are still fighting the F.B.I. and the system, but they're fighting as high-paid criminal-defense specialists for corrupt politicians and mobsters—outlaws, but outlaws with deep pockets and fewer pretensions to revolutionary ideals. But Kunstler's kept going, kept defending penniless pariahs and problematic outlaws like Larry Davis as if they were political activists.

"He's sort of like the last person at the party," Steven Brill, *American Lawyer* and Court TV founder, says of Kunstler's lonely eminence. "He hasn't realized the party's over, and he's still having a good time."

Kunstler opposed Christian Brando's guilty plea. "I don't think what was done was best for Christian. The case was triable."

Indeed, as Kuby—a ruddy, energetic guy half Kunstler's age who sports a floppy ponytail that is more Berkeley 1971 than New York 1991—reads off from their wall calendar the staggering list of trials, pre-trial hearings, appeals hearings, written briefs, and client meetings they've got lined up for the weeks and months to come, you get the feeling that Kunstler and Kuby are single-handedly shouldering the entire radical-pariah caseload which a whole movement once handled. (In fact, the chief criticism of Kunstler you hear from those on the left is that he takes so many cases that he's sometimes flying by the seat of his pants in court—relying on quick study to cover up for lack of preparation.)

After a court appearance for Kevin McKiever and a consultation with McKiever's mother, Kunstler's flying down to Georgia to argue the appeal (for a new trial) of convicted murderer Wayne Williams. (The appeal, prepared with Alan Dershowitz, claims Williams, a black man, was framed by Atlanta officials hysterical over the wave of child murders and fearful a race war would result if the actual, white, Klan-related killers of Atlanta's black children were exposed.) Then it's up to Fargo, North Dakota, to argue the third habeas corpus appeal for imprisoned Native American radical Leonard Peltier. This is a case Kunstler's been fighting for more than fifteen years now (he won an acquittal for one of Peltier's two co-defendants). It's a cause that's close to his heart. Indeed, on the wall across from the court-appearance calendar in his office there's a photograph of Kunstler standing shoulder to shoulder with Marlon Brando as the two of them marched into a prison to calm a disturbance which had broken out in support of one of the Wounded Knee defendants.

(Two years ago, Brando woke Kunstler up at three one morning to tell him he'd discovered that his son Christian had shot a man in his house. Kunstler flew out to handle the initial stages of the case, but dropped out or was eased out by Brando after calling the judge who denied Christian bail "a toad." Kunstler says they fell out over a sharp disagreement about trial strategy: he opposed making a deal to plead Christian guilty. "I don't blame Marlon," Kunstler told me. "Except I don't think what was done was best for Christian. I think that case was triable. We might well have gotten him off on a lesser offense.")

But before he can go about the business of getting his clients out of jail, Kunstler's got to take steps to prevent being thrown into the slammer himself. He's got to file his final appeal to the latest contempt-of-court sentence hanging over his head. He drew the penalty in the midst of a heated exchange with Justice Thomas Galligan, who was presiding over a post-trial hearing for convicted Central Park rapist Yusef Salaam. (Kunstler entered the case after the conviction.) When the judge denied his appeal motion, Kunstler called it "outrageous! You will not have an evidentiary hearing despite all the law that calls for it?"

The following dialogue ensued:

THE COURT: I will not hear oral argument. Call the next case.

MR. KUNSTLER: You have exhibited what your partisanship is. You shouldn't be sitting in court. You are a disgrace to the bench!

THE COURT: Sir, I hold you in contempt of court. . . . You are fined $250 or 30 days in jail.

Music to his ears. This morning he's searching the chaotic heaps of files on his desk for the notice of appeal he's supposed to file (the sentence has already been upheld by the first-level appellate court). But I have the sense that Kunstler would just as soon not bother with the appeal and go directly to jail. The contempt sentence calls for a fine of $250 *or* thirty days in jail, but Kunstler's

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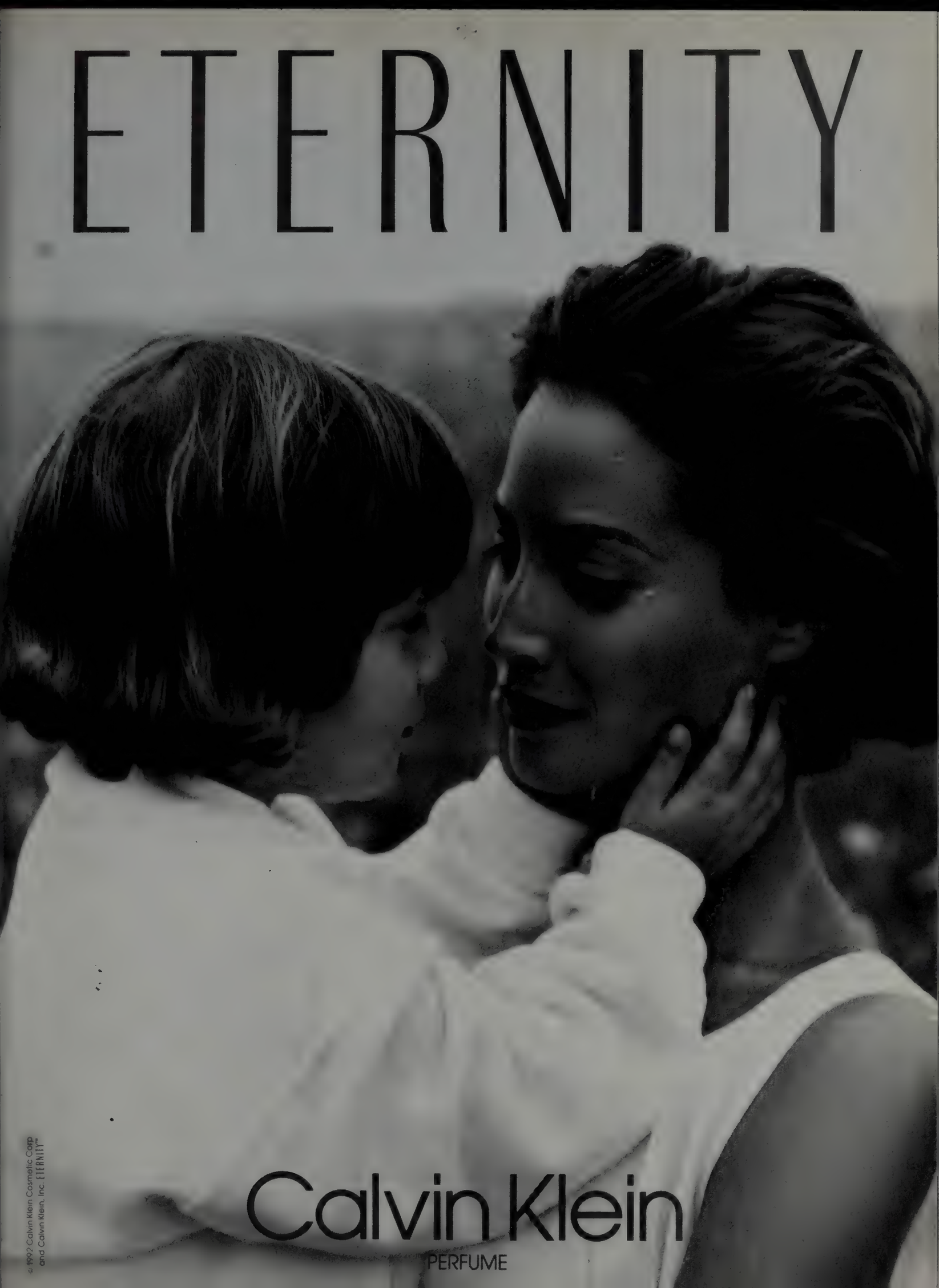

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already announced to the press that he intends to "do the time" rather than pay the fine. (In December, he lost his final appeal, but an anonymous donor paid the fine and kept him out of jail.)

"If I just pay the fine, people will say, 'Here's a white lawyer who can buy himself out by paying $250.' It would make me feel like a big shit to pay the $250," he tells me. "I remember Dr. King when he was in jail said, 'I'm not going to be bailed out—the other people can't get out, why should I?' "

"So this is a symbolic gesture?"

"My super-romantic view of the lawyer's role."

And, perhaps, his hyperawareness of the role of public relations. In Peter Matthiessen's book on the Wounded Knee/Pine Ridge cases, *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*, one of Kunstler's fellow attorneys describes how one time, threatened with jail for contempt of court, Kunstler "started doing his thing.... He all but threw himself into the arms of the U.S. marshals, smiting his brow and crying, Take me! Take me!"

Kunstler himself referred me to this passage in the book, but for him the point of the story comes in the sentences that follow, which describe the even more egregious publicity-seeking conduct of Kunstler's co-counsel in the trial, Mark Lane: "Lane couldn't let... Bill get busted and not *him*, so he went running over there yelling, Take me too!"

The lust for publicity exhibited by Lane, Kunstler tells me piously, "becomes, I think, a terrible sickness."

"Has Bill Kunstler ever fallen victim to it?" I ask him.

He's been mightily tempted at times, he allows. And he admits he's found a way to use his celebrity, his notoriety, to give him an advantage with judges and juries. "I think the stereotype, the caricature, that I'm just a crazy, you know, loose cannon—the judges are tremendously relieved when they find out I'm not that way. I'm kind of gregarious. I embrace people, I joke with people. And I have a good time." Being a celebrity, he says, "can give you an edge."

But Kunstler avows solemnly that he long ago realized there are limits to the love of publicity. He describes an epiphany he had on the subject of P.R., when he saw the line even he wouldn't cross. It happened back in 1971 when *Esquire* asked him to pose on their cover for a story they were doing about radicals and their cats. "The picture they wanted was me lying in the arms of a giant papier-mâché cat that [Richard] Avedon had created. My wife told me, 'That's such a ridiculous reason for you to be on. In the arms of a cat? You just want to be on the cover of *Esquire*. If they asked you to pose nude, you'd do it.' I said, 'Jesus, you're absolutely right.' I turned it down. And I realized that I had to watch this tendency. Because it's almost like a narcotic."

The lust for publicity "becomes a terrible sickness," Kunstler says. But being a celebrity "can give you an edge."

Still, he *did* consent to pose for a photograph on the inside of the magazine, holding his cat Thunderpussy. And he's constantly doing things that show his almost childish pleasure in minor P.R.—like when I suggest getting a burger in a nearby tavern rather than his favorite local coffee shop, the Waverly, on Sixth Avenue in the Village, he'll say, "But you gotta see the picture they've got up of me on the wall." And when we were eating in that beloved coffee shop and he was telling me about how he won his first big court case for Martin Luther King, I asked him how it *felt* suddenly being a force at the very heart of the great moral crusade King was leading.

"It was marvelous," he said, adding, "I got good press. All of my ego needs were met."

As with most famous lawyers, those ego needs are not inconsiderable. Someone who worked closely with him put it this way: "The only thing that surpasses Bill's commitment to the movement is Bill's commitment to Bill.... While his passion is morally directed, the movement also provides him with a vehicle to satisfy voracious emotional and psychological appetites. He is a proud, outrageous, courageous, competitive, guilt-ridden, egotistical man who needs a forum."

The McKiever case is, in a way, the perfect Kunstler case because it gives him the high-profile forum he craves for himself—and for the convictions about racism which so possess and obsess him.

Consider the way Kunstler handles the consultation with the mother of his "most hated" client later that Tuesday. A consultation which Kunstler turns into a forum by agreeing (with the consent of McKiever's mother) to have it filmed by a camera crew from CBS's prime-time news show *48 Hours*.

It's part of a remarkably shrewd media campaign Kunstler and Kuby have been waging on behalf of their client, with the goal of shifting the public perception of McKiever from predator to victim, a campaign that has had some success by the time they sit down with McKiever's mother and the cameras start to roll.

One thing they've done is make an ad hoc alliance with a city-magazine reporter, letting him track down McKiever's medical records to document the long history of schizophrenic episodes and hospitalizations—a solid basis for an insanity plea. They've been leaking details of McKiever's history of mental illness to local dailies, which have begun depicting him less as a malevolent, feral predator than a victim of his own neurochemical demons. In December, court psychiatrists found McKiever "competent" to stand trial, but Kunstler is still determined to prove that his client's mental capacity was impaired at the time of the killing.

The medical records show repeated instances of McKiever being released from hospitalization and then forgotten, never followed up on. In part because he was homeless and resistant to care. In part because, Kunstler and Kuby contend, he was poor and black and nobody cared enough about his fate. Which makes him—as well as the murdered woman—both victims of underfunding and neglect by the system. Of racism as well. Or so Kunstler's trying to get McKiever's mother to say for the cameras.

The mother, Eleanor Matthews, a well-dressed middle-class black woman (she sent Kevin to artsy Bard College, where he studied drama—acted in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*—before giving way to schizophrenia in his twenties and ending up a homeless drifter), is sitting on the battered green couch across from Kunstler's desk in the basement of his Gay Street town house.

She's telling a heartbreaking story about the death of her other child, a daughter who also began manifesting symptoms of schizophrenia in her twenties. "Nobody cares," she says bitterly. "The same thing happened to Kevin": hospitals discharged him, nobody tried to follow up.

"Well," says Kunstler as the network

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cameras roll, "I don't want to bring this totally into a racism situation. But it *is*, you know, from my point of view."

"It happens to white people too," Matthews says, seemingly not as ready to charge racism.

Kunstler has no such reluctance. "But with black people, I mean, there's even less care by the dominant society of what happens to black people—the lack of care and not really giving a damn what happens to them."

Kunstler has no doubt that this isn't a murder case; it's a *political* case, a racial case, and the real guilty party is the white-run society that failed to save a sick black man on his way down from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to a bloody midsummer nightmare.

Cut to Memphis, later that month. The balcony of the Lorraine Motel. The very spot where, in 1968, Martin Luther King fell bleeding from an assassin's bullet. Kunstler was here that night, staying in a room just a few yards away when he heard the shots. And now, twenty-three years later, he's back. They've washed away the blood but not the memories. And now the memories and the motel are being turned into a shrine: the National Civil Rights Museum, built on the skeleton of the old motel, is being dedicated this week, and Kunstler's been invited down to participate in the dedication ceremonies. Which have turned into an emotional reunion for the scattered black and white and graying veterans of that genuinely heroic and idealistic epoch.

On the flight down to Memphis, Kunstler was telling me about that moment in 1961 when his whole life changed and he found himself swept into the whirlwind of Martin Luther King's moral crusade.

It was something very surprising and sudden. He was a latecomer to radicalism. "I was forty-three, I was living in Mamaroneck with a wife and two kids," he recalls. His law practice then was mainly low-profile trust and estate work. He'd written a textbook on corporate tax law and passed his first fifteen years as a lawyer doing nothing more radical than joining the A.C.L.U.

In fact, he was more a writer than a lawyer, working on a book about famous crusading attorneys such as Clarence Darrow (*The Case for Courage*), but only dreaming of becoming one himself.

The summer of 1961 found him out on the West Coast doing publicity for his most recent book (*Beyond a Reasonable Doubt?*)—on the then celebrated Caryl Chessman "red-light bandit" death-penalty controversy—when he got the phone call which changed his life.

He remembers the day as if it were yesterday: "The day my life changed, June 14, 1961. Rowland Watts [of the A.C.L.U.] called me in California and said, 'You've got to go to Jackson, Mississippi. The Freedom Riders are being arrested by the hundreds and being sent to Parchman' " (the notorious Mississippi chain-gang state pen).

Abraham Lincoln's assassination turned out to be a good thing, Kunstler says. "Lincoln was a pretty bad guy, you know."

"So he said, 'There's a black lawyer there by the name of Jack Young who is handling these cases. Drop in and say hi from the A.C.L.U.' "

When Kunstler arrived in Jackson, capital of the most defiantly segregationist state in the South, "I walked into Jack Young's office—he was a postman who'd studied law in the office of the only other black lawyer in Mississippi at the time. And I said, 'The A.C.L.U. sends you regards.' He said, 'Fuck the A.C.L.U. I need bodies here. I'm going crazy.' "

Kunstler soon became more than a body. He became the co-architect of the legal strategy that played perhaps the crucial part in the success of the civil-rights struggle in the South.

The Freedom Riders, you'll recall, were trying to implement recent Supreme Court decisions banning segregation in interstate-transportation facilities (buses and bus-station lunch counters, rest rooms, and drinking fountains). What they were really doing was offering up their bodies as fodder to be beaten, jailed, and brutalized by the southern segregationist legal system in order to arouse northern outrage against the apartheid-like conditions down there.

They never expected to win their court cases. They expected to be jailed as Gandhian moral witnesses. What Kunstler did was help devise and implement a strategy that often led to their actually winning the cases, beating the racist system.

"Shortly thereafter, I met a young lawyer, a Mississippian whose great-grandfather was governor of Mississippi when it left the Union in 1861, William Higgs. And when we got to know each other he said, 'Bill, there is this little-known statute coming out of the 1866 Civil Rights Act. Called Civil Rights Removal. It was enacted in order to keep newly freed slaves from being tried in the state courts by their old masters.' "

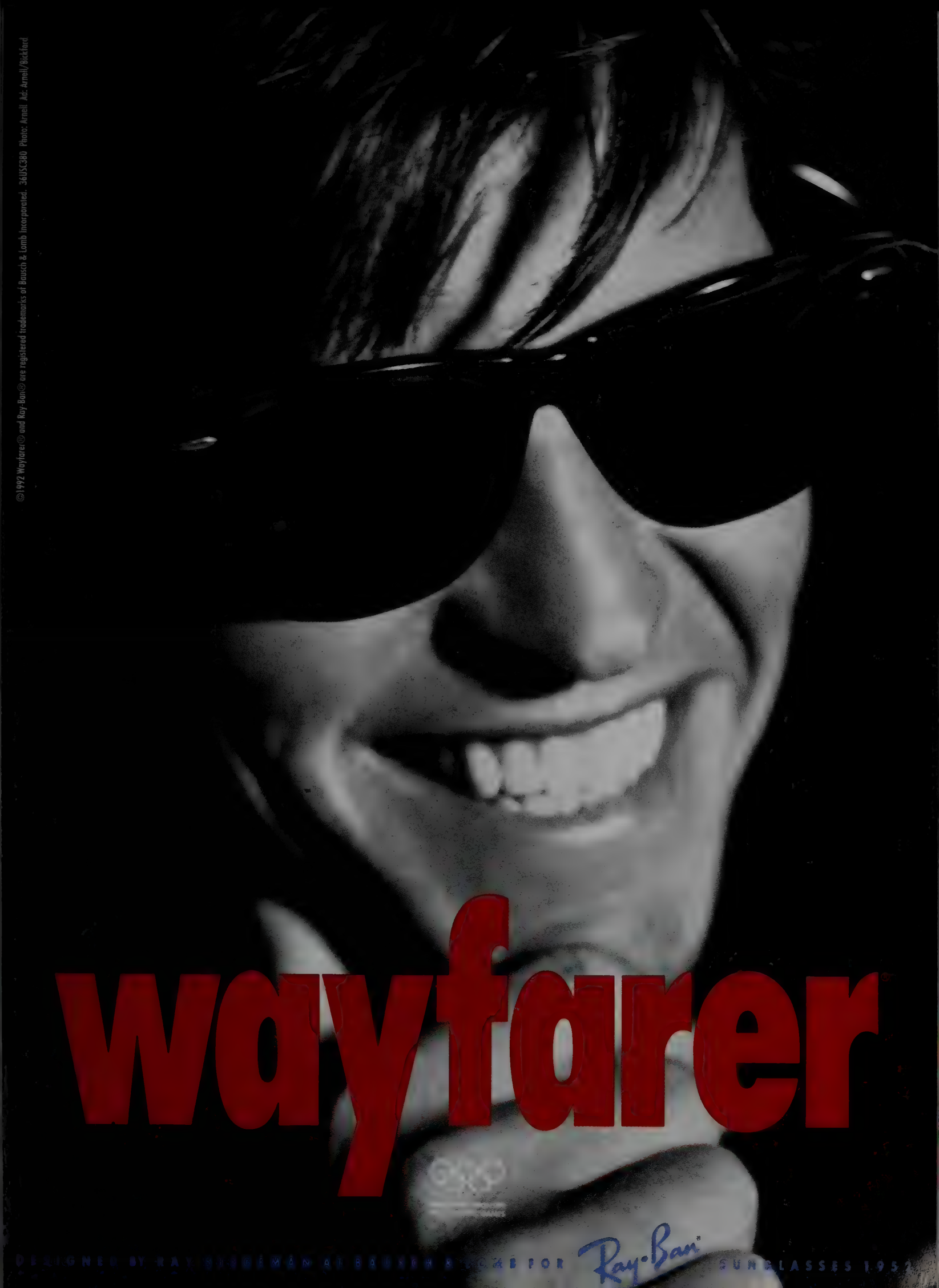
Kunstler thought the century-old Reconstruction statute could be used in the context of the Freedom Riders and King marches: to get the cases of protesters "removed" to federal courts, and—more importantly—to get the bodies of the protesters out of the jails, out of the custody of the murderously bitter southern lawmen.

A segregationist federal judge named Harold Cox heard Kunstler's Freedom Rider–case removal argument. "We surprised all those Mississippi lawyers and D.A.'s. They knew nothing about the rule. But Cox, who was a bastard but at least read the law, he granted the motion." And a legal revolution in the South was born that made possible the success of the civil-rights crusade and brought Kunstler to Martin Luther King's side, where he became his personal trial counsel, a position he held until King's death.

It's impossible to overestimate the exhilaration, the fear, the camaraderie that bound together those who went through that amazing struggle in the South, before it all turned sour after King's assassination. You can hear it in Kunstler's description of the first court case he handled for Dr. King, at a pivotal moment early in King's desegregation campaign.

"They called me to Albany, Georgia, where there had been an injunction issued prohibiting Dr. King from speaking in public. The night the injunction came down I was with King," Kunstler recalls. King wanted to go to the church where he was scheduled to speak, to see if it was filled. "Because if he couldn't speak maybe he'd join in. And it was really filled. People stomping and cheering. And then two guys came up to us saying, 'Dr. King, there's a bunch of men with rifles looking for you. White men. You better get off the streets.'

"So we went back to the house and King said, 'Let's pull all the shades.' And we did and we got a candle to light the room. And there was a piano in the room and King said, 'I think we ought to sing.' And from nowhere came a woman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who played the piano. It was Coretta [King], myself, Martin, a couple of other people. And we sang for an hour. It was the most thrilling experience I ever had in my life."

As he recalls that peak experience he adds, characteristically, "I wanted to pull the roof back. Let all America look in at this one white guy, brand-new to the southern civil-rights movement. With Martin Luther King and his wife..."

That addendum is pure Kunstler. Here's a story of undeniable courage, camaraderie, moral beauty. But he can't help thinking of it in terms of a spotlight on "this one white guy"; the public-relations consciousness of the moment is inseparable from the emotional power of the thing in itself.

He stayed by King's side all the way to Memphis in 1968, where King was leading a black sanitation men's union strike. Kunstler had flown down from New York to seek an injunction against the Memphis police, who were breaking up picket lines. He arrived at the Lorraine Motel, where King was staying, checked into his room, and checked in with King.

"We were planning to have dinner that night to discuss the injunction. But he told me he had appointments elsewhere that evening, so we'd talk in the morning."

They never did. That night, April 4, 1968, in his room at the Lorraine Motel, a few yards from King's, Kunstler heard the shots.

Something changed that night. For Kunstler, for the country. A new, meaner, more violent and divisive spirit entered into the racial politics of America when King departed. For Kunstler it meant a shift from being at the very center of the middle-class moral consensus in the country as legal champion of King's nonviolent crusade to a far more controversial, more marginal and dangerous association with far angrier, emphatically non-middle-class black militants like H. Rap Brown, the Black Panthers, and the "Attica brothers." Whose credo was Rap Brown's famous repudiation of King's Gandhian stance: "Violence is as American as cherry pie."

Not that Kunstler necessarily regretted the shift from center to fringe. Even before King died, Kunstler had come to prefer the caustic, sarcastic edge of Malcolm X to Dr. King's noble piety.

"Martin's been elevated into a plaster saint," he tells me that day down in Memphis. "He's become the white man's Negro—remember the way Reagan lectured the blacks in South Africa, telling them they should be 'more like Martin Luther King'?

"Malcolm," he says, "had something Martin didn't have. Martin had a private sense of humor, not a public one. Malcolm had a public one."

After Malcolm became famous as the steely-eyed militant with the eloquent, hectoring rhetoric who rejected King's nice-guy integrationism, Kunstler still saw another side of Malcolm, a kind of private warmth and generosity rarely on display to whites. There was the time Kunstler asked Malcolm to give an interview to a friend, a disabled man who worked part-time at a suburban paper near Kunstler's Westchester home. "The guy was paralyzed and could only type with his toes, but Malcolm spent four hours with him, slowly, patiently repeating each sentence until he got it, all for an interview no one would see anyway."

Martin Luther King "has been elevated into a plaster saint," says Kunstler. "He's become the white man's Negro."

Kunstler has been supplying Spike Lee, who is doing the big, already controversial Malcolm X movie, with material he's dug up from his personal files, including one of the first radio interviews Malcolm gave, in which Kunstler —the interviewer—opens by asking, with mock naïveté, "Would you mind explaining for me the meaning of your name, which is the letter *X*?"

Spike Lee had told Kunstler he wanted to cast him in the film and Kunstler had thought he'd probably play himself. Somewhat to his surprise, he's learned that Lee wants him to play the white judge who sentenced Malcolm to jail.

Interesting choice. I wondered if Lee, no mean student of character, had sensed something about Kunstler. Sensed perhaps a streak of judgmental harshness beneath his genuine warmth and gregariousness.

I get a hint of that hanging-judge side of him in the course of an argument we have on the question of assassination. The subject comes up in the aftermath of an extremely tense pre-trial hearing for alleged Kahane assassin El Sayyid Nosair.

Kunstler had succeeded in enraging the J.D.L. contingent that was watchdogging the Nosair trial by embracing the alleged assassin and planting a big kiss on his cheek. There was an audible gasp from the row of Kahane supporters in front of me. Followed by an urgent, outraged whisper: "*Look!* Kunstler *kissed* him!"

"They don't like it at all," he says. "But you know, with me and clients—I get a *relationship*. I don't want to feel that I have to conduct myself differently because they don't like it. And besides," Kunstler says, "Nosair looks in many ways like every nice Jewish boy I know, wouldn't you say?"

"Well, I wouldn't go that far, Bill," I say.

What was it about that kiss that made it so incendiary, so transgressive? I sensed that what the J.D.L. contingent objected to was not the kiss but the *blessing* implied by the kiss, a blessing for the bloody deed Nosair was accused of: approval of the assassination, sealed with a kiss.

Were they right? I put it to Kunstler directly: "Nosair denies shooting Kahane, but what if he'd announced that he *did* kill him and that he was proud of it, that he did it to defend Palestinians in Israel, whatever? Would you have defended him on those grounds?"

"Of course," he says quickly.

"Because you felt that Kahane deserved to die?"

He pauses, and his words in response to that question come more slowly:

"No... You know, you know... I don't want to sound too *liberal* in the article."

I thought at first he meant he didn't want to sound too extreme, too left. But, in fact, he was saying he didn't want to sound too temperate: "I think there *are* some people that do deserve to die, who add nothing but misery and... I mean, Kahane was a hard and bad man... He was an awful guy. I won't say that I *don't* think the world is a better place without him."

He pauses and sighs. "I got into a lot of trouble some years ago, remember, with the Kennedys? I was in Texas, where I had argued Jack Ruby's appeal case, and I said that I thought that the world was a better place without the Kennedys, that they were two of the most dangerous men America ever produced. And there were revelations later that proved I wasn't so far off-base: Vietnam, the wiretaps of King, the vi-

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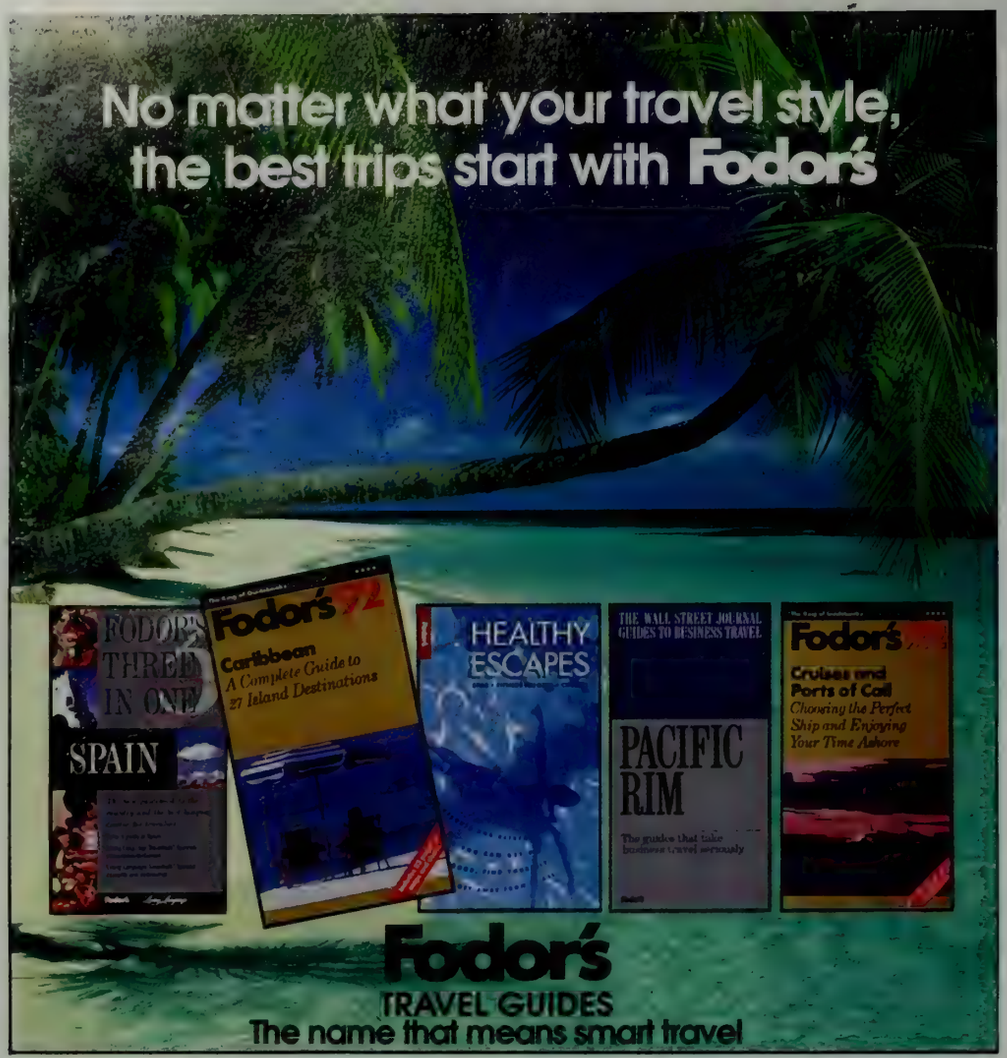

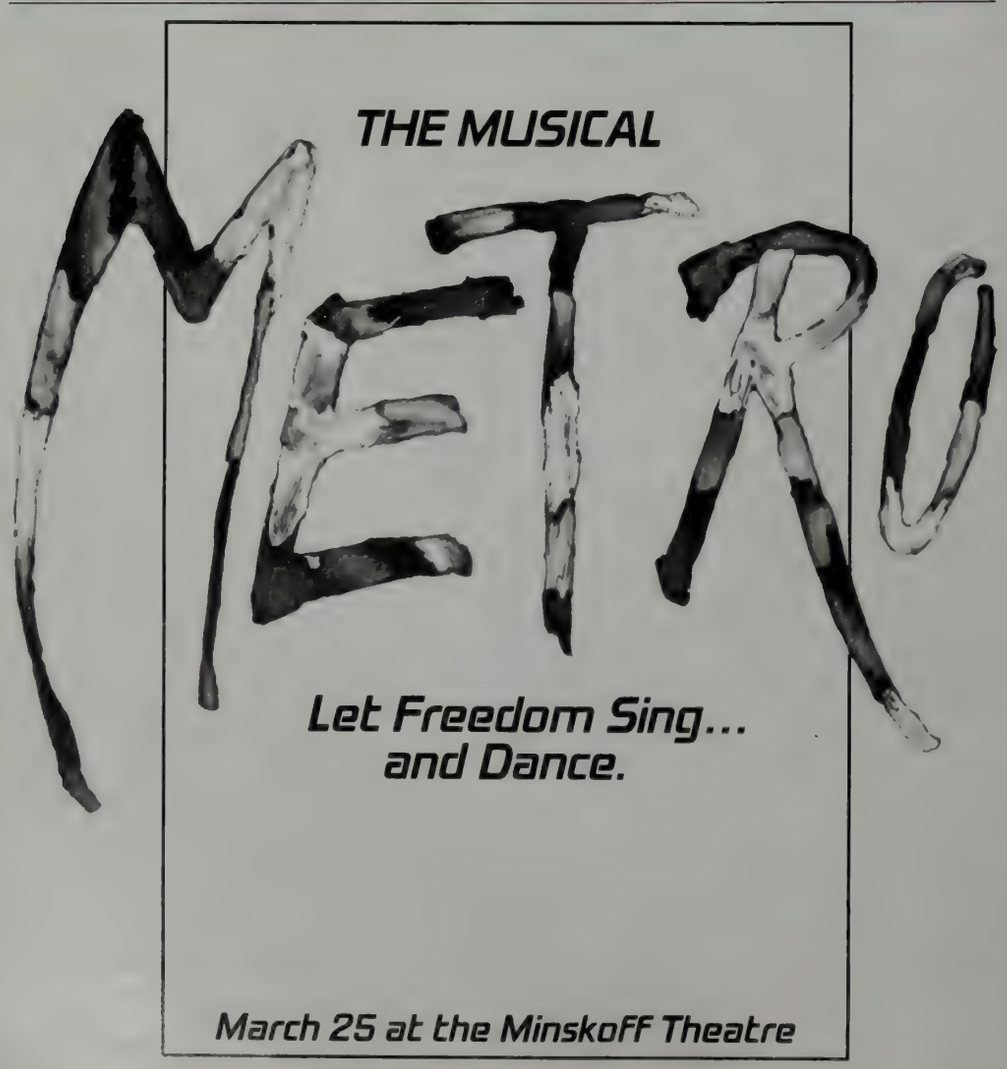

ciousness of the Kennedys. They were not a good crew, so I was just ahead of my time. *The New York Times* said in an editorial I should be disbarred, my associates were totally shocked, and it was probably a bad thing to say. But I don't want to sound like some mealymouthed liberal who says, 'Everybody has got a right to live.' I'm *not*, you know. It may sound cold and callous to say that he deserved to die. But—think of Hitler—there are a lot of people that if they had been assassinated early in the game probably the world would be a better place, no question about it."

"But isn't that a double-edged sword?" I ask. "I mean, the guy who killed Martin Luther King thought the world would be a better place without him."

"It's a double . . . but you make political choices, you know," Kunstler says. "King's assassin was *wrong*."

At this point he goes even further and says something even more inflammatory: he tells me the assassination of *Abraham Lincoln* turned out to be a good thing. "The assassination of Lincoln saved Reconstruction." Lincoln, he says, opposed the efforts by northern liberals to enact laws to force the former Confederate states to treat the newly freed slaves fairly.

"Lincoln was a pretty bad guy, you know," he persists. "His being assassinated gives him an aura." He cites instances of Lincoln manifesting overt racist attitudes even while the Civil War was raging.

"But don't you have to look at him compared with others of his time, actual slaveholders for instance?"

"No, you can't do that. I don't buy that. You can excuse anything that way."

No excuses for Bill Kunstler, moral absolutist. Not even for himself: he faults himself for lacking the guts assassins have. "I wouldn't say 'Do it' or encourage it," he says. "But that's because I'm still too much a middle-class white man."

"Are you saying you wish you could be the type who *would* do it?" I ask him.

"In a way you always get the feeling that you would like to be more of a revolutionary. I'm doing a book about revolutionary lawyers—among them Thomas Jefferson, Robespierre, Ho Chi Minh, Fidel Castro, Gandhi, Lenin, etc.—that *have* done it. Made a revolution. And yet maybe the times aren't right or you lack the guts. But I can certainly understand it and I can defend people who do it. I don't believe that everything can be done by law and order and the courts and the system. So I'm not going to lie to you

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or anyone else, even though it makes me look a little *hard* sometimes."

Where does all this guilt about middle-class inhibitions come from, this near-religious self-laceration for failure of nerve? After thirty years of putting himself on the line and demonstrating the courage of his convictions, why does he still feel he "lacks guts," why does he still have to prove he's "hard" enough?

There's a story he tells me one day in the Manhattan criminal-courts building, about his childhood, the story of The Black Boxer Who Still Waits for Bill, one that cries out to be read as a kind of Rosebud of Kunstler's quest.

Kunstler is telling me about his childhood on Manhattan's Upper West Side, where he grew up in a family prosperous enough to have black servants in the house (his father was a doctor). For a while, he says, it looked as if he was headed for juvenile delinquency, hanging out, in his pre-high-school days, with a gang of poor Irish kids, committing petty crimes like robbing gumball machines for coins. Being accepted as part of "a gang of goyim" (as he calls it) gave him a sense of pride, but this brief brush with a life of crime vanished, he says, once he entered high school, felt himself challenged by the work, and turned into the honor student who would graduate Phi Beta Kappa from Yale.

But beneath the bright surface of this *cursus honorum* (which included winning a Bronze Star during W.W. II army service in the Pacific) there was a dark stain, he says, a legacy of racism that ran in his own family. One, he tells me that morning in court, which *no* white American can escape from.

"You get it in your mother's milk," he says, although he recalls getting it from his father's mouth. "You know when you're a kid in a car, and you hear your father yell 'nigger' at someone who cuts him off?"

"What do you mean 'your father'?" I say. "My father never used the word."

"Well, mine did," Kunstler says, "and my mother had black servants, it was *there* in the background."

But there was one moment in particular when it emerged suddenly: racism red in tooth and claw. It happened when young Bill told his father he wanted to pay a special visit to Harlem to see a sick black man.

"I'd seen a story about a black boxer named Sam Langford who'd been injured or something and I wrote to him, you know, an encouraging letter saying I'd like to meet him. And he wrote back saying I could meet him if I showed up at a certain place at a certain time up in Harlem. But then I told my father about it and he told me, '*Harlem!* You can't go up there, they'll cut you up with razors.' When I wouldn't listen he brought in this police detective he knew who tried to scare me with all these stories of dangerous criminal black people who'd rob me and kill me."

Young Bill bought the scare story.

"I bought this bill of goods," says Kunstler, still remorseful sixty years later. "I didn't go."

He shakes his head. "I didn't go," he repeats. "I always regretted it. I tore up the letter he wrote me. I flushed it down the toilet. I didn't want it around."

You can hear it in his voice as he tells it: he still has a mortifying vision of the injured black boxer sitting in a lonely room somewhere up in Harlem sorrowfully waiting for the white boy who never showed up.

Not that the real-world boxer necessarily gave it a second thought. But, magnified by the distorting lens of adolescent emotion and guilt, the wounded black athlete is *still* there waiting, an eternal reproach to the boy who let him down. And a constant metaphorical admonition embedded in the psyche: Never let a black man down again, never fail to come to his rescue, never give in to that white middle-class caution ever again.

What that means in practice is crucial: that Kunstler is virtually unable to criticize, or even advise moderation to, any black radical for fear that the impulse to restraint comes from the same infirmity—white middle-class inhibitions—that held him back from visiting that boxer.

Once, in a coffee shop, the one that boasts his picture on the wall, I asked him directly: "You believe no white person can have the moral standing to criticize the strategy and tactics of black people?"

"No," he said flatly. "Until some mythical day when whites and blacks are really truly equal in their own eyes and in the eyes of each other, white people cannot have more than a surface input into decisions that affect blacks."

"So you can't criticize Sharpton, say?"

"No, not publicly."

What's disturbing about this attitude is the overtone of paternalism: he might be willing to tell a few black leaders in private his reservations about their strategy. But he won't communicate any such criticisms to the ordinary newspaper-reading, TV-news-watching black

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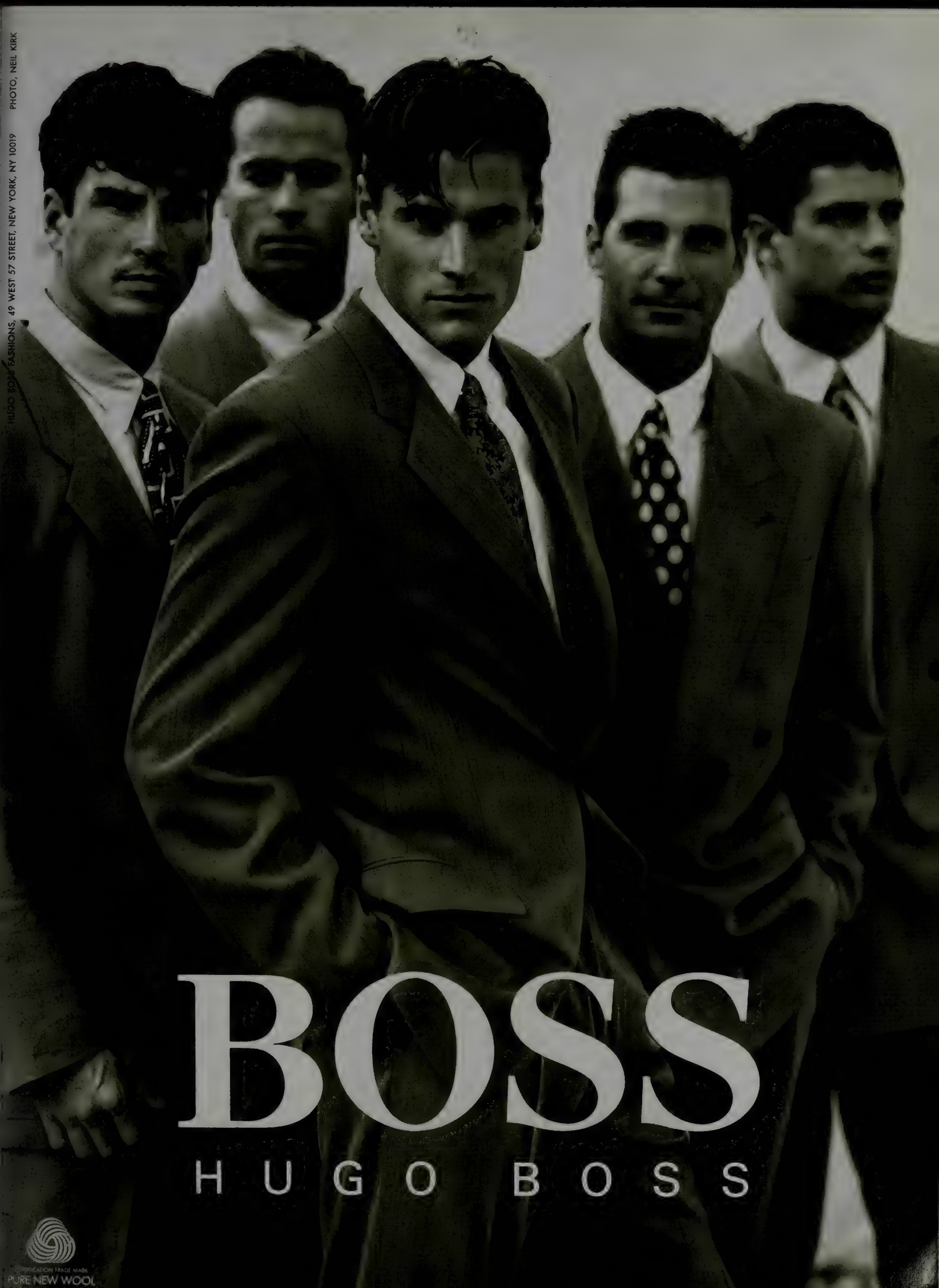
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citizen. He may have his reasons (solidarity in the face of white America), but in effect he's denying the black man on the street the best, truest fruits of his intelligence and experience. Why? Because he doesn't think they can handle it? Or because Kunstler himself is a bit too dazzled and intimidated to dissent from charismatic black figures? Like, say, Larry Davis: is Kunstler's praise of Davis for shooting cops really going to "put the fear of God in police officers"? Or is it more likely to end up putting a bullet in the heart of an unarmed black kid because a cop on the beat has taken Kunstler's ill-considered words to mean that every black kid is gunning for him?

And isn't it ultimately condescending to assume that all black defendants are victims? Doesn't that deny black people the power and dignity of taking responsibility for their own actions?

The paradoxes of white guilt offer no easy way out to those obsessed with absolution.

"Bill has a lot of guilt," someone who knows him suggested to me. "You can see it in the way he treats his family now, his second wife and kids. With his first wife it was, well, he was traveling all over the country and, you know... and he was away from his kids a lot, too, and you can see how he's been really devoting his time to his new kids now, really wants to do right by them. And with the people he defends, he wants so badly to be loved by them, to have them hug him, to be the one who rescues them, to make up for..."

There's some truth to this observation. At one point, while we were in Memphis, Kunstler spoke frankly about the failure of his first marriage. About his fears in marrying a much younger woman (by twenty-six years), how he worried whether he should have started a second family at that age—what if he'd died too soon and left his new kids fatherless at a tender age? There is a lot of guilt in his personal makeup. But nothing as profound as his guilt over being white—and his relentless search for expiation for the Original Sin of his skin color.

Memphis again. Bill Kunstler is sobbing in a church. He's up at the pulpit in front of a packed house of his civil-rights-movement brethren. He's begun to introduce his old comrade-in-arms H. Rap Brown (now a Muslim named Jamil Al-Amin). He's started to recall some of the trials they've gone through together, but he reaches one particular point, one particular memory, and he can't go on. He breaks down and flees the podium.

Now, Kunstler is an emotional guy and a good actor for a lawyer (some might say a good lawyer for an actor). And I've seen him get emotional and go around embracing friends and strangers, kissing alleged assassins and the like. But this weeping, this loss of control, seems different, seems to come from a deeper place, the place where the black boxer still waits for Bill.

The break point came when Kunstler was describing an extremely intense period back in 1970, when Rap Brown was a fugitive wanted by the Feds for "crossing state lines to incite a riot."

Brown disappeared, went underground. But Kunstler kept the faith—even after viewing a horribly mangled corpse he had been told was the remains of his friend. "I saw half a brain sliding down a stop sign, but I knew the body wasn't Rap's."

And then suddenly, in late 1971, Rap Brown did surface, in a bloody shoot-out with cops in New York at a bar called the Red Carpet Lounge following what the cops claimed was a bungled armed-robbery attempt. Brown wound up near death from two slugs in his stomach, under arrest, under heavy guard, in a Rikers Island hospital bed.

Most white liberals were scandalized by the episode, a confirmation of their fears about the new, militant leadership of the movement. But Kunstler didn't hesitate. He rushed to be at Brown's side and, after conferring with his client, told the world that H. Rap Brown wasn't some common stickup artist, that the shoot-out actually resulted from Brown's attempt to put some drug dealers out of business. That it wasn't a crime but an act of idealism. It was a foreshadowing of the defense he used for Larry Davis: one brave man taking on a ring of drug dealers.

It's a defense that provoked intense skepticism. Kunstler knew it would, but he didn't care. Once again a stricken black fighter had summoned him to his side, once again the voices of white middle-class caution were warning him it's too dangerous, back off. It's the test of faith he failed in that Lord Jim moment as a youth. But his tears today, as he recalls his visit to Rap Brown's hospital bed, are tears of triumph because this time he backed up the black fighter, stayed at his side. Whatever the truth about what Rap Brown did, Bill Kunstler kept the faith. □

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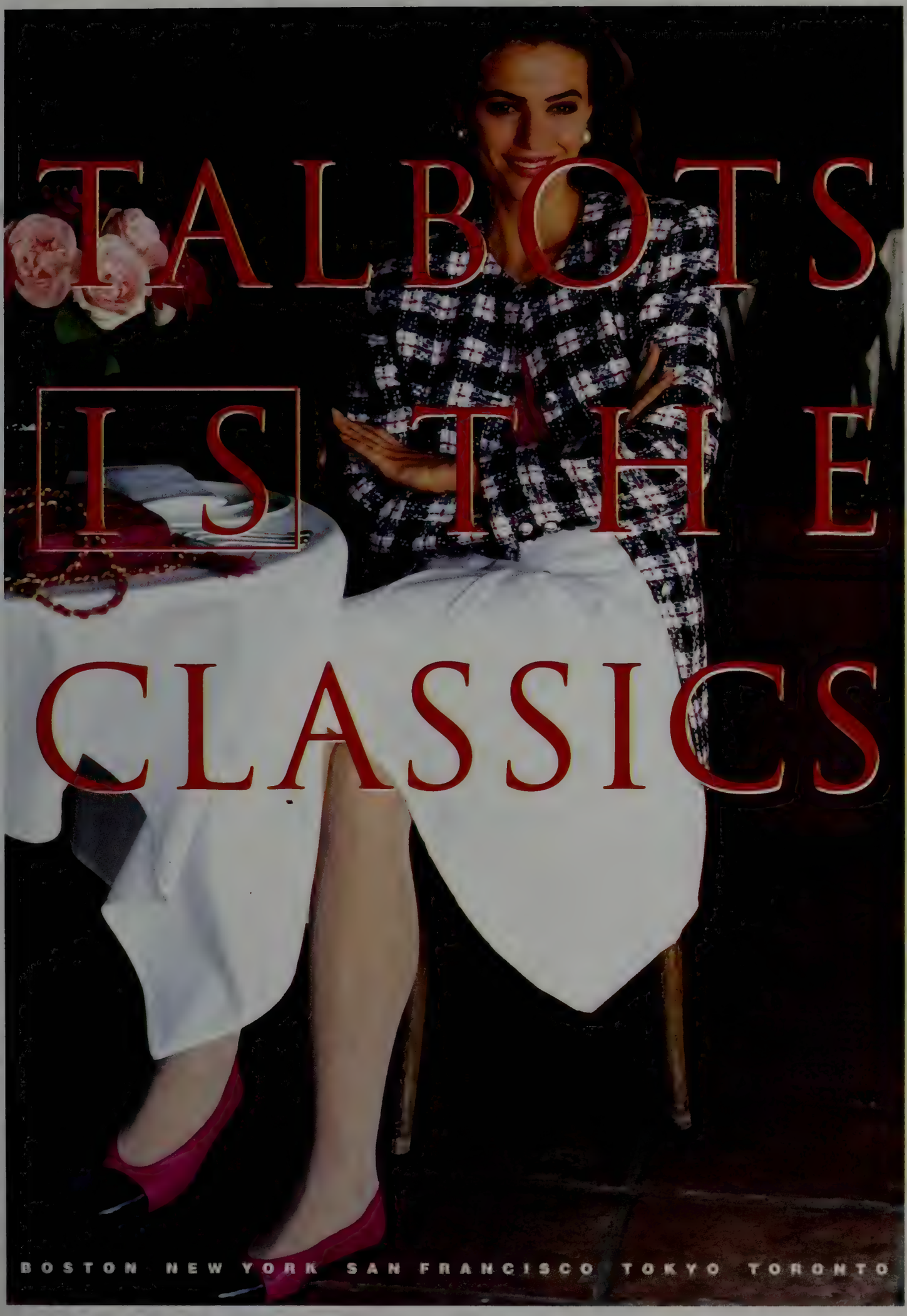
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Julie Burchill: Britain's Ma Barker of blazing-guns attention grabbing.

BURCHILL'S BITE

Journalistic iconoclast Julie Burchill and her gang of Brit wits at *The Modern Review* are aiming to be the voice of the nineties

BY JAMES WOLCOTT

In person she has the purr of a pink telephone. In print she has the bark of small-arms fire. At sixteen she left Bristol for London to board the *New Musical Express*. She saluted Joseph Stalin in *The Face* and said what England needed was a Russian crackdown. With shiny claws she composed *Ambition*, which she demurely describes as "my smasheroonie bestselling numero uno blockbusting novel." Now, at the age of thirty-two, Julie Burchill is, word for word, the highest-paid female columnist in Great Britain, wearing out three typewriters a year pounding the pulpit in *The Mail on Sunday*, rubbishing everyone from Prince Charles to Salman Rushdie, risking the return fire of Third Worlders, tree-huggers, and other touchy minorities. She avers, for example, that the recent history of homosexuals is a real comedown. "Once they made up the majority of the Western world's kings, philosophers and great writers; now they are so exhausted by twenty-one years of marching, disco-dancing and screwing around that they seem fit for nothing but show business—surely the lowest of all callings." A punkette turned babe, a Stalinist mouthpiece reborn as a material girl, Burchill is Britain's Ma Barker of blazing-guns attention grabbing.

She isn't a lone sniper, Burchill. Like Ma Barker, she has a mob. Her posse is the staff of the new quarterly *The Modern Review*, a pop-cult magazine meant to seize the moment. Says Burchill during a chat at London's Groucho Club, "In the sixties, there was *Rolling Stone*; in the seventies, *New Musical Express*, in the eighties, *The Face*." Which leaves the nineties achin' to be taken.

The Modern Review is intended to be not only a scan of everything on the radar screen—the first two issues contain articles on porn, Freddy Krueger, Nintendo, splatter comics, Stephen King, and *Scarlett*—but also a platform for a youth push. Gray hair has always made Burchill see red. Her punk manifesto, *"The Boy Looked at Johnny,"* co-written with her first husband, Tony Parsons, damned the hide of anyone who wasn't slim and aglow. Nick Lowe, a pop minstrel and producer of Elvis Costello's finest albums, was dismissed as a "middle-aged, multi-chinned" magpie. Burchill says that her excesses as a punk are now deeply embarrassing to her. Here she and I diverge. Those three years I spent with a giant safety pin through my head were the happiest of my life. But despite her chagrin, she has not adopted a mellow outlook toward age and authority. The names may have changed, but the song remains the same. Or as Falstaff burst in *Henry IV*, "Bacon-fed knaves! They hate us youth. Down with them, fleece them!"

It's a cry her cohorts share. According to *The Modern Review*, whose editors include Burchill's second husband, Cosmo Landesman, English culture has become a creaky caricature of itself, dominated by tweedy, seedy dummies and mummies shedding dandruff wherever they go. Addicted to dusty volumes of Samuel Johnson, G. K. Chesterton, and church hymnals, these "wrinklies" deplore the new. (They hate us youth!) The founding fossils of this turn-back-the-clock movement include Auberon Waugh, editor of *The Literary Review*, Alexander Chancellor, former editor of *The Spectator*, and Richard Ingrams, former editor of *Private Eye*, who will soon be taking each other's pulses at a new magazine devoted to the concerns of the near departed called *The Oldie*, which will carry a column by chastity's fairy godmother, Barbara Cartland. Also spreading cobwebs is the funny and frail Jeffrey Bernard, who in his "Low Life" column in *The Spectator* has the fallen sound of a pile of bones at the bottom of the stairs. To Burchill, this over-the-hill gang blocks access to fresh gusts of activity.

"When you're young, you're drawn to the media because it seems very exotic and flash and youthful and glamorous. In London, to some extent, the media has become one huge gentlemen's smoking room—you can't sit anywhere and not be choked by Jeffrey Bernard's cigar fumes." All this chumminess breeds complacency as these balloon faces blow kisses to one another from across a crowded page. "Saul Bellow writing about Delmore Schwartz doesn't seem as sordid *(Continued on page 108)*

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(continued from page 98) as Clive James writing about Martin Amis. Is it because time lends it charm, or is it because they wore hats all the time?"

But in time even the coziest *cosa nostra* comes apart. Old Farts such as Ingrams and Waugh have seen their disciples defect...and prosper. The most famous apostle, the novelist A. N. Wilson, managed to leave his wife and renounce God while not losing a nose hair of his nancy tone. Burchill sees *The Oldie* as an anxious attempt to batten down the hatches. It's like Islam, she claims, a crumbling militant faith trying to rein in the remaining flock. "They're the last of the mad mullahs. The mad mullahs of gerontology." In the second issue of *The Modern Review*, bacon-fed Auberon Waugh is drawn with a small penis, pissing gasoline from a great height—a disfigured father figure.

There's a geopolitical angle to this generational dispute, a tug of allegiance between Europe and freak-show America. To the Old Fogies, America is a nation of noise. Fraught with racial strife, feminist hissy fits, and political correctness, the country has become a permanently arrested, hormonally unbalanced overgrown adolescent, "disintegrating into terminal self-absorption" (Waugh). For maturity the Fogies look to Europe, with its museums and many fine wines. To the Young Snots, however, America is still the star-maker among nations, the casting couch of our desires, the psychiatrist's couch of our troubled dreams. To them, united Europe is a colorless knit. "They make John Major look like Liberace, these men at Maastricht," cracks Burchill. And behind the bureaucratic standardization imposed by E.C. '92 squats the economic might of Germany. England has more to fear from Bundesbank number crunchers than from *Nightmare on Elm Street*. In *The Modern Review*, Burchill confronts the specter haunting Europe: "One morning, sometime in 1992, WE WILL WAKE UP AND DISCOVER THAT WE CAN NO LONGER MAKE GREAT POP RECORDS." Not a prospect that would perturb mad mullah Richard Ingrams, who considers the pop coverage in quality papers such as *The Independent* a mere pandering to youth. Enough already with these crazy kids and their wacky dances, he seems to be harrumphing. To which Burchill mutters in reply, "Fifty-five-year-old humbugs..."

In her sexual politics, Burchill is a girlier Camille Paglia with a smaller syllabus. Like Paglia, she has an almost touching awe of the iconic, intercontinental reach of Madonna's titanium-tipped bazoomies. And like Paglia, she rips her fellow feminists for their pious, prudish fatalism. Which makes it a surprise to hear that she's a fan of the apocalyptic American killjoy feminist Andrea Dworkin, who depicts all relations between men and women as gutter fighting. To open yourself to a man is to invite scourge. When I aver (you should have heard me) that Dworkin seems to be bigger now in England than she is in America, Burchill quips, "She's big everywhere," a reference to Dworkin's barn-size build. Which of course doesn't detract from the COGENCY of her deranged analysis.

"I think she's brilliant," says Burchill. "I thought Valeria Solanis [Andy Warhol's would-be assassin and the founder of SCUM—the Society for Cutting Up Men] was brilliant, too. Feminism is a very broad church. You need these manic, crazy dyke feminists to keep everyone on their toes. There are so many 'reasonable' feminists these days who keep stressing, 'I love men. I'm not a man-hater.' And after a while I want to slap them around the face and say, Don't debase yourselves this way. Do you see black militant leaders going around saying, 'Look, don't worry—I love white people, I got nothing against them'?"

"In London, the media has become one huge gentlemen's smoking room—you can't sit anywhere and not be choked by Jeffrey Bernard's cigar fumes."

But, I object, there's something absurd about Dworkin's fiction, where it's rape around the clock. Her heroine's getting raped from page one.

"Some girls have all the luck," says Burchill with a giggle.

How broad a church is *The Modern Review*? Its rafters could use raising. Although it's capable of apt juxtaposition (illustrating a review of Martin Amis's *Time's Arrow* with panels from Alan Moore's comic "The Reversible Man"), it suffers from the English curse of being clever. The contributors wish to rise above the slick phrasemaking of style publications such as *Arena* and *The Face*, yet avoid being Pseuds' Corner pretentious. (Without entirely succeeding: "There is an internality, but it's the internality, or things-as-they-are, of popular psychology.") The liveliest American critics aren't afraid to look foolish in their affections, to race down the aisle to embrace their beloved. They strip the bride bare. English critics tend to drape the veil. And aside from Burchill herself, there's an absence of strong women's voices. Essentially, *The Modern Review* and *The Oldie* spring from the same impulse: to provide a clubhouse in which to publish you and your friends.

Even so, thus far it hasn't been the best stage for Burchill's act. Her *Mail* page, with its multiple items and photo captions, bungs the reader like a collage barrage. You can almost *hear* the clack of her typewriter. Her short items read like ransom notes. *The Modern Review*, with its long slates of text, is closer to tombstone. Described as a cross between *Smash Hits* and *Scrutiny*, *The Modern Review* is her bid for semi-respectability. It's almost touching, her desire to move beyond tabloid success. Perhaps she recognizes that the danger she faces as a writer is that she may become so dependent on her own shock effects that she will turn into pop-dom's Germaine Greer, a dry bushel of fanatic positions. At her most Earth Mothery, Greer seemed determined to trod upon the rest of us as if we were mere grapes beneath her feet. Despite the boom-box level of her prose, Burchill is more skittish.

As evidence: After our soirée at the Groucho Club, who should she and her husband bump into but Clive James and Martin Amis? (Which proves TITANS really do walk among us.) According to an eyewitness, James asked, "Don't I recognize you?" Cosmo: "Hi, I'm Cosmo Landesman." James: "Have you met Martin Amis?" After shaking hands, Landesman asked Amis, "Have you met my wife?" But when he turned around to introduce them, Burchill had already made tracks, "hotfooting it down the street..." Greer would have taken root in the sidewalk, jousted with the guys. It was as if out of shyness or irritation Burchill just couldn't bring herself to play the game. □

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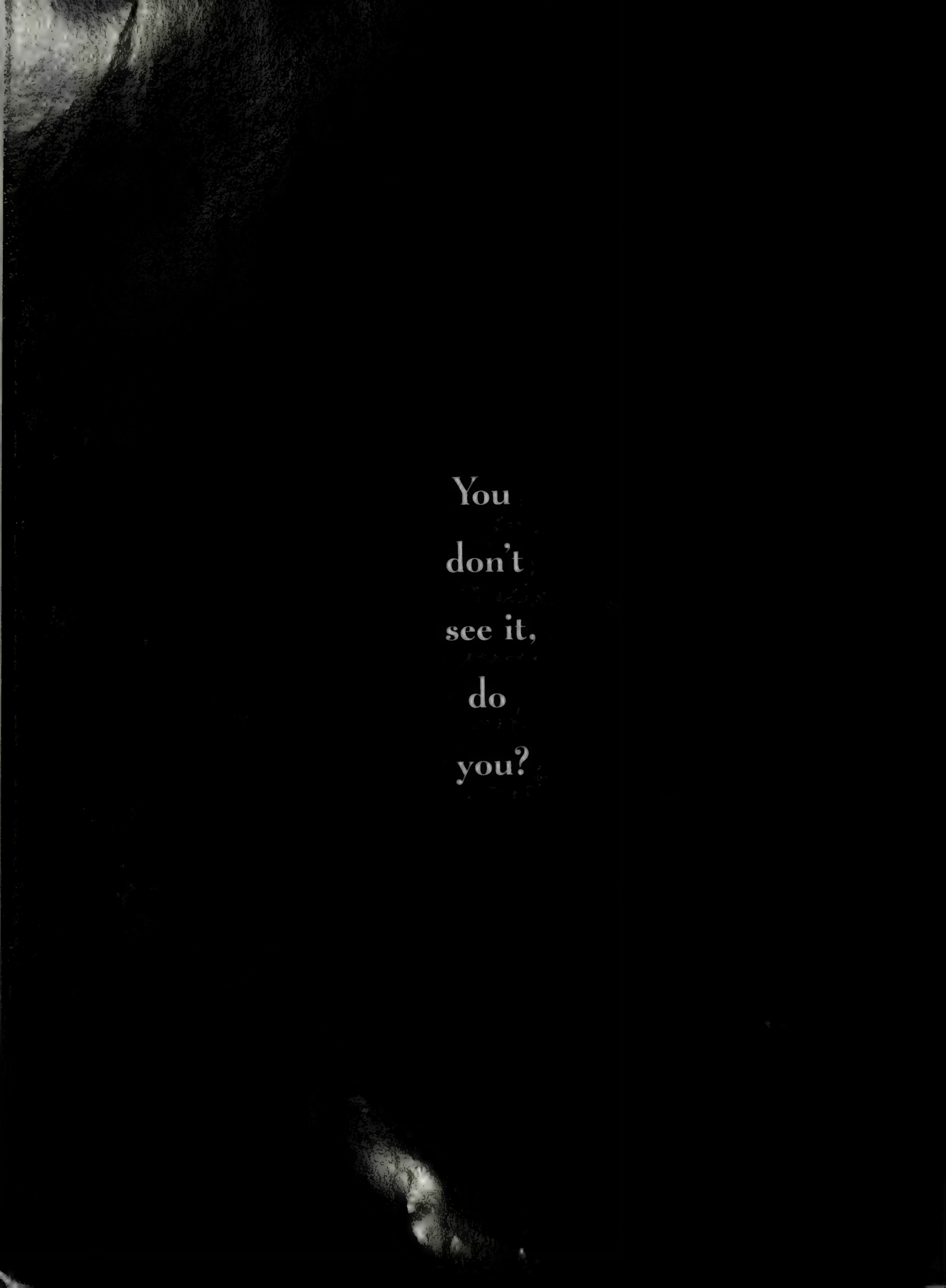
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THE RISE OF THE DESERT RAT

Following twenty years of near obscurity, Antoine Predock—suddenly one of the most sought-after architects in the world—is making his star rivals nervous

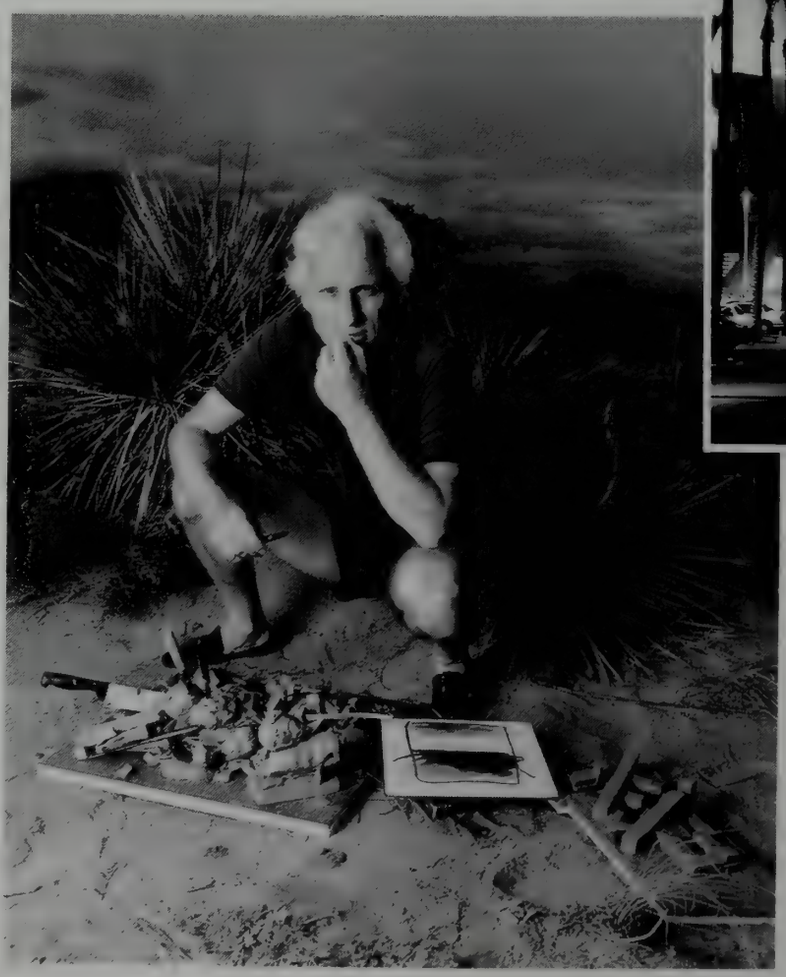
BY MIRIAM HORN

On the day of Antoine Predock's 1988 Disney interview, he walked into Michael Eisner's Bel-Air home with a huge roll of paper stuffed under his arm. It was a collage, produced with the help of four young architects in Predock's Albuquerque office. Since Eisner had suggested a Santa Fe theme for a hotel at Euro Disney, eighteen miles east of Paris, the architects had created a chaotic assemblage of images torn from visitors' guidebooks, postcards, and movie magazines. There were cacti and scorpions, native pueblos and satellite dishes, John Wayne's head turning into Devils Postpile, a half-eaten body preyed upon by vultures.

New York architect Peter Eisenman was just finishing his interview, so Predock cooled his heels in Eisner's dining room. Looking around at the walls hung with paintings, he realized there was no place to put his twenty-five-foot-long creation. Like its creator, it would fit no conventional frame.

He carried the collage into Eisner's backyard and pinned it up on the patio wall. Lawn chairs were hauled out onto the grass, and the group settled in to hear Predock's explanation. "The West is about trails," he said. "Vapor trails in the sky, Interstate 40, dirt roads leading to nowhere—all are trails of the imagination." He showed them the yellow line cutting right up the center of the collage. "This is the trail of infinite space, one of those trails that makes you want to follow it, wherever it goes. And here, at the end of it, is a spaceship, a U.F.O." Eisner, his whole body leaning forward in his chair, listened intently as Predock talked. "That's all great," he finally said. "But where is the architecture?"

Antoine Predock is the outlaw of American architecture. Where others in his profession are cool, urbane, cerebral, he is physical and intuitive, a whirling force of nature. He doesn't live at architecture's epicenter, New York, but at the age of fifty-five has spent the past thirty-seven years in the high desert of New Mexico. Nor has he ever met the Godfather, the man whose patronage has been critical to the launch of nearly every contemporary architectural star. Antoine Predock doesn't know Philip Johnson.



Shaman's art: Predock with raw materials at home in New Mexico, and (*top*) his Las Vegas Library and Lied Discovery Children's Museum. "I think of architecture as landscape in drag."

"I think of architecture as abstract landscape," he told Eisner. "It's kind of like landscape in drag." Picking up a pile of blocks that once belonged to Eisner's kids, Predock began to create for his audience an architectural mountain, piling up buildings to create stepped terraces, a ridgetop, steep-walled canyons. Trails for cars, Predock said, would climb the mountain, passing artifacts of the real and mythic West along the way: a hanging tree, a rusted car, a huge drive-in movie theater with an empty screen.

Eisner found the performance mesmerizing, and commissioned not only

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the $40 million Santa Fe Hotel, scheduled to open on April 12, but also a $125 million, thousand-room hotel and convention center for the future expansion of Orlando. That nicely rounded out a project list for Predock that includes four museums, a library, a civic center, two theaters, several private homes, and buildings on four different university campuses in California, altogether adding up to some $300 million. Though he inhabits a place far outside the power centers and prevailing styles, Predock is rapidly becoming one of the most successful architects in the world.

It is Monday morning in Albuquerque, and Predock has asked me to be at his house by eight. When I arrive, I find him squatting, a pillow between his knees and his back to the wall. An elasticized jump rope is pinned beneath his feet and he is tugging at it, working his shoulders up and down. "You should do this," he tells me. "It's great for your back." Tossing the rope aside, he leads me past his racing bike and Rollerblades into a room with a massage table and an odd-looking machine, which he climbs into, hooking his knees over a bar and flipping himself over. With his white curls falling toward the floor, he keeps talking in his soft, intense voice, about abdominal breathing and the alignment of the spine.

His house is one piece of a complex of buildings that serve as his primary studio; a couple of years ago, when his work in California took off, he opened a second, smaller studio near the Venice beach and rented a small "crash pad," as he calls it, nearby. From his kitchen and dining room in Albuquerque, he can look across the courtyard to where his young team, most in shorts or jeans, is trickling in. He squeezes organic orange juice for both of us, and gestures for me to help myself to an array of vitamins on the shelf.

"The diet, the exercise and meditation—it's all in the service of his architecture," says Christopher Calott, until recently a project designer in his firm. "His athleticism is a big part of his competitive edge. Architecture is like an endurance contest, with architects having to run around the country selling their wares, and then run around some more to supervise the work, and lecture. Antoine does more of that than anyone, and he never wears out."

The house is open and quiet, but like Predock's studio is filled with the raw material of his inspiration. On a corner table is his collection of kitsch: a plastic Statue of Liberty with a snowstorm pedestal, a tiny sombrero, a Wayne Newton button, a jacked-up toy pickup truck, a plastic pyramid with a coin-operated mummy inside. A lot of architects talk about pop culture these days, but Predock is its most enthusiastic consumer. All of it worms its way into his architecture. When he built his library and children's museum in Las Vegas, he cruised the Strip for inspiration, and ended up dressing the building with lights for the Vegas night.

On the plane to Phoenix the next morning, Predock is preparing a presentation for a new government center in Las Vegas. He has found us a row of seats at the back, with another row facing us, and he has his feet up, a sketch pad and brush-pen in his lap, and a box of pastels balanced on his shins. He works rapidly, laying ink on the page like a master calligrapher or a scribbling child, producing, as I look on, a thing startlingly beautiful. He has brought along a plastic tub of guacamole and a bag of chips, which he is scooping into his mouth between brushstrokes. He wipes his hands on his jeans before he smears the pastels across the page. He is, at this moment, perfectly content.

"Nature boy," Peter Eisenman calls him. "Antoine plays a game as a sort of noble savage, a shaman, a medicine man. He looks like that and he plays the role, talking about the life of rocks and stone and sand. He is a shaman, I think. But it is also a spin, everybody has a spin, and I guess maybe the cultural spin is changing his way."

There are archaic, sacred forms in his work, pyramids and soaring obelisks. But there is also neon, James Bond, and Bart Simpson's hair.

Predock was trained as a painter by Elaine de Kooning, among others, and studied dance with his ex-wife, Jennifer, who was in the Metropolitan Opera Ballet while he was an architecture student at Columbia. Traces of both disciplines remain evident in the way he works. He has great faith in the unself-conscious gesture, what he calls "the innocent mark." "I think I've drawn the Panthe-on a thousand times," he says. "I wanted it to become like my signature, my handwriting. That's what I want it to feel like when I draw. That line, the cut in the clay, the spontaneous assemblage of materials on a board, that movement my hand makes becomes part of the building later."

Predock sited a house once by running up and down a ridge, spinning around at points of spectacular views or interesting geological formations, and then drawing a line through his footprints and transferring it to the page. "Most of us have lost our connection to the earth," says Michael Rotondi, director of the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-ARC), the current headquarters of design hip. "We've forgotten how to improvise, because we work everything, always, all out on paper. We've lived in our heads so long, we need to reintegrate the body and the mind. Antoine is the one architect right now offering us that inspiration."

While nearly all of his peers are descendants of European classicism, the Bauhaus, and the International Style, Predock's architectural bloodlines are deeply American, reaching back to Whitman's metaphysical raptures on the land, to Frank Lloyd Wright's acute responsiveness to place, to the pure monumentality of the mystical Louis Kahn. There is no Predock style. For each of his buildings, he returns to architecture's first principles: the bony structure, the massive stripped masonry wall, the ritual of procession and arrival, the retreat into the dark, cool cave. There are archaic, sacred forms in his work, stepped pyramids and soaring obelisks, ceremonial stairways and circular pools. But there is also titanium and neon, Wim Wenders and James Bond, Stealth bombers and even Bart Simpson's hair.

It is a white city in the sun, Predock's planned Disney hotel in Orlando, curling around the edges of water which spills from deep, churning pools into a broad, still bay. Out of the water, fragments of a building emerge: chunks of fallen concrete, jagged, broken columns. It is, says Predock, the lost city of Atlantis.

The idea of place has not been big in architecture these past several decades. Most modern buildings have been indif-

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ferent to their surroundings, simply shoving the landscape out of their way. "It's been so easy to have a universalist vocabulary," says Robert Venturi, who was awarded architecture's highest honor, the Pritzker prize, last year. "But Antoine is a genius at connecting with the place he is working in, and with great artistry. It is that quality, I think, that makes him world-class."

Predock begins each project with what he calls a "conceptual excavation" of a site, digging deep into its geological and cultural past. For Orlando, he was given the task of creating a Mediterranean city. "Rather than lean on motifs, like red tile roofs, I turned instead to myths of the Mediterranean cultures," he says. "It was a way to avoid overt nostalgic references, a way almost of tricking myself. I got interested in the idea of the labyrinth, and started reading Umberto Eco, Lawrence Durrell, Mary Renault. The whole team read *The House of Asterión*, by Borges, and then we diagramed it, listed the physical descriptions in the story, and began to extrapolate spaces from that.

"I thought about lots of stuff. The fragrance of jasmine, the snake goddess, the Minotaur. I like those James Bond movies where the islands are all caves. You know the ones, where the landscape opens up and a speedboat rushes in and the landscape closes on them from behind. I thought about scenes from *Key Largo*, about white linen suits and ceiling fans, tropical clothes blowing in the breeze, what the ceremony of arriving at a resort ought to be."

"It looks to me like the best work being done for Disney," says architectural historian and critic Charles Jencks. "Like Isozaki, he understands what Disney is doing without being too accommodating, so he doesn't end up being themed to death. Most of the new Disney buildings are one-liners. They can't be ambiguous for more than twenty seconds. But Predock manages to be both specific and allusive, to always suggest but never name."

Like all of Predock's buildings, Orlando will be, as he puts it, "a ride." The physical way in which Predock makes architecture results in buildings that are themselves extremely sensuous. He creates notches to peer through, cool hollows to hide in, narrow, twisting paths to explore. He uses the sound of water, the fragrance of herbs. At his Rio Grande Nature Center in Albuquerque, the entrance is an underground passage through a big metal culvert, which combines the mysterious allure of a tunnel with a great, thrumming sound when visiting children play it with a stick. His American Heritage Center and Art Museum at the University of Wyoming in Laramie is a volcano-like cone, approached through a ceremonial *allée* of topiary spruce and ascended on a long ramp. Sheathed in metal, the building will, like the peaks surrounding it, catch falling snow. "I want to ski it with my sons when it's finished," says Predock, who once managed a single turn on the roof of condos he designed in Taos. "The cone's asymmetrical, so it has beginner, intermediate, and expert terrain."

People use his buildings as playgrounds, romantic rendezvous, temples, stages. At the Nelson Fine Arts Center at Arizona State University in Tempe, Predock turned a pyramidal roof into two sets of bleachers. On the day we visit, lovers are basking in the sun. We sit to talk on long benches set against cool walls under a deep overhang. ("I was thinking of a baseball dugout," he says.) In an exterior corridor, splashed with lacy shadows by the metal grille overhead, a trumpet player lingers over scales, fooling with the resonant acoustics afforded by the concrete walls. For its opening three years ago, a composer actually set a piece of music on the building, scattering clusters of performers on its balconies, steps, loggias, and arcades. This is a building of great majesty, its flytower a soaring blade cutting into the sky. In plan, it is like an abstract sphinx. "We noticed it was starting to look like an animal, so we pushed it," says Predock. "We lengthened its paws, gave it a tail and a stinger, and nudged it, sending it crawling toward L.A."

Predock was born in the Ozarks, in Lebanon, Missouri, and his French-sounding name is a legacy of his Quebecois ancestry. His youth was spent in St. Louis and at eighteen he moved to Albuquerque. In the years since, the desert has worked on him as it once worked on Georgia O'Keeffe, D. H. Lawrence, and Paul Strand. It is the desert that has formed him, converting him with its vast barren spaces, its transparent light, the pervasive presence of an intensely spiritual native culture.

Predock designed his first project, the La Luz housing development outside of Albuquerque, in 1967, when he was thirty years old. His peers still deem it a "precocious masterpiece." Made of adobe mixed from sand excavated on-

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site, the houses are an abstract mesa, or a Minimalist's riff on the pueblos of the area's indigenous peoples. That land, those people, were present in everything Predock did for most of the next twenty years. Working almost exclusively in New Mexico, he used his isolation to forge a unique approach to design. "Growing up the way he did," says Mack Scogin, chairman of the architecture department at Harvard's Graduate School of Design, "Antoine wasn't burdened with all the traditional baggage, the great history and European tradition that might have pointed him in a more narrow direction. His vision remained fresh. Everything is new for him, every time."

Until his late forties, Predock remained on the margins, considered a talented, if probably limited, "regionalist" architect. Living and working off every beaten path, he was not well positioned to capture the attention and patronage of those who were nurturing other architects' careers: developer Gerald D. Hines, Yale architectural historian Vincent Scully, *New York Times* critic Paul Goldberger, Canadian Centre for Architecture director Phyllis Lambert, and director of the Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities Kurt Forster.

But Predock's isolation ended abruptly in 1985, when, after a year spent as a fellow at the American Academy in Rome, he returned home with no work and entered the competition that would prove the turning point in his career. The Nelson Fine Arts Center won him both the American Institute of Architects' National Honor Award and the 1989 Buenos Aires Bienal, and marked the beginning of a period of intense activity and mounting fame that doesn't seem likely to end anytime soon. His firm soon grew from four persons to thirty-one. After decades of near invisibility in print, he was suddenly everywhere, and ever since his work has appeared almost monthly, championed by such editors as Karen Stein at *Architectural Record* and John Morris Dixon at *Progressive Architecture*. "They've developed an appetite for the myth," says a New York writer, "and now compete assiduously to publish his buildings."

When, in 1986, Predock won two more national competitions, other laurels followed: Gianfranco Monacelli, president of Rizzoli, proposed a monograph, adding Predock to a roster that includes James Stirling, Richard Meier, Aldo Rossi, and Kevin Roche. Invitations arrived to lecture and teach at the Walker Art Center, SCI-ARC, and Harvard's Graduate School of Design. Maguire Thomas Partners, which has assumed Gerald D. Hines's mantle as the connoisseur among developers, commissioned Predock to design a building for a business park in Texas. And Disney's Michael Eisner, the most sought-after architectural client in the world, saw Predock's work and gave him a call.

Predock is flourishing in the hungriest of times. With development pretty much at a standstill, the huge corporate-design firms are bleeding. Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates has been the latest casualty. Since the middle of 1990, the firm has cut a third of its architects. In the course of the last two years, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill has laid off a third of its employees worldwide. Both are now chasing commissions they wouldn't have touched a few years ago, the medium-size institutional work that was formerly the property of the small, high-design firms. Those firms are not faring much better. Stanley Tigerman cut his staff from thirty to fourteen. Even Michael Graves is busy largely, he says, by virtue of his work in Japan. That action is something they would all like to get a piece of, which has made architect Arata Isozaki, "the Philip Johnson of Japan," the man to court.

Worse than the recession is architecture's deepening malaise. Though the little hats and faux columns of postmodernism continue to crop up in suburban shopping malls across the land, it long ago ceased to offer any inspiration to critics or students. Deconstructivism, too, is rapidly losing its short-lived cachet, having hardened too quickly into a mannered, spiky style. Both turn their back on contemporary culture, retreating into sentimental historicism or a nihilistic scowl.

Against that background, Predock seems a bracing tonic, an antidote to the pessimism and arcane rhetoric that have drained so much of the life out of architecture. "Antoine's work is hopeful," says New York architect Steven Holl, "unlike the backward-looking stuff that I think represents the profession's collective failure of nerve. He has successfully resisted the postmodern movement, which so many American architects sold out to. Frank Lloyd Wright is not literally evoked in his work, but is there in Antoine's spirit of irreverence toward the tastemaking culture, and reverence for things like light, space, landscape,

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site—dimensions lost in the copybook eclecticism that is so dominant in architecture today."

As the cultural wheel turns with the dawn of the presumably more sober nineties, the very unfashionable architectural values Predock pursued in near obscurity for two decades are all at once the height of chic. He was an environmentally sound architect, using passive heating and cooling technologies and indigenous natural materials, when such concerns were dismissed as vaguely sixties and quaint. Now "green design" has become one of the hot buzzwords in the business. Hip, too, in this era ill-disposed to Eurocentrism and the heritage of "dead white men," is Predock's love of vernacular architectures and multicultural sources, and his relative indifference to the canonical traditions. What remains to be seen is whether Predock's new currency proves a benighted blessing. Though his lack of a signature style will make him a difficult hero to knock off, second-rate imitators will undoubtedly try. Like Mies or Michael Graves, he may end up judged by the shabby work of his successors.

Predock's success is more than a matter of the times' catching up with him. He himself is an intensely charismatic personality. With his boyish, small-town awkwardness and antic manner, he seduces clients, the people who work for him, and critics with equal ease. "He's a chameleon," says one of his staff. "He can read people and adapt himself. I don't mean in a slutty way—he always does it with integrity. But clients are mesmerized by the way he talks about buildings. They may think he's a little weird, but they feel like they're in the presence of a real artist."

Well aware of the effect he has on people, Predock has astutely chosen not to domesticate himself for public consumption into something less strange. For all his otherworldliness, he is also enormously ambitious, relentlessly driven to see his vision realized. Though he has one associate—Geoff Beebe has been with him since the mid-1970s—Predock's proprietary control remains absolute, a fact made clear in the very name of his firm. Where others call themselves Frank O. Gehry and Associates, or Eisenman, Architects, he is Antoine Predock, Architect. Period. He is present at every stage of a project, staying involved long past the point where other star architects check out, protecting a building through years of approvals and construction, ensuring that his authorship is complete. When I ask him if he would ever take on a partner, he hesitates. "Why would I want to do that?" I suggest it might afford him an opportunity to rest. "I don't want to rest. I want to keep doing this as long as I can. My work and my life are one."

Predock surrounds himself with smart, talented designers, who wander in and out at will and generate a sort of fertile chaos in every room. But Predock's obsessive perfectionism can be rough on the people who work for him. He is sometimes brittle, bristling when he is teased, and is often hypercritical over trivial things. When an employee puts slides wrong side down on a light table, he snaps at her. "Don't you know that these are supposed to go like this? Don't ever put slides down like that again." After a company weekend skiing trip, a sort of family camp-out in Predock's condo in Taos, I witness a baffling outburst over two bags of laundry that somehow failed to make it back to Albuquerque. "Antoine should be the design genius and let somebody else deal with the laundry," says one of his staff. "That's how other architects handle it. They get managers in to do the stabbing, so the principal can stay the good guy and let everybody hate the henchmen. Venturi, Pelli, Pedersen—they all got a partner who was good at marketing, a complement. But Antoine ends up doing stuff he's not good at, like managing people."

"He does have some of the personal hallmarks of 'the great architect,' " says Sylvia Lavin, a friend of Predock's and assistant professor of architectural history at U.C.L.A. "There's a bit of the *Fountainhead* syndrome in all of them. Antoine's relationship to architecture is all-consuming in a very Romantic sense. I can well understand that people around him might feel displaced or bruised."

Although he keeps his private life under heavy armor, Predock's manic devotion to architecture until recently seemed to be sabotaging his personal relationships as well. He is close to his sons, Hadrian, twenty-four, and Jason, twenty-two. And he has attracted a devoted circle of female admirers, many of them architecture writers and students, earning him a racy reputation among his peers. But those closer to him painted a very different picture, that of a man who had taken an almost religious vow to his work and so kept himself free of

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But as Predock's professional horizons have broadened, so have his personal ones. Since last May he has been happily involved with Constance De Jong, a successful sculptor who teaches at the University of New Mexico. After so many peripatetic years, Predock now makes it back to Albuquerque at the end of most days. "Maybe we just don't want a more normal life," says De Jong. "We both have work to do, and I don't ever feel like I'm in competition with his architecture. There probably was a time when he was more interested in architecture than anything else, but he has achieved so much of what he worked for and, I think, now feels there is so much more in life to have. Though it's almost too bad I came into the picture," she laughs. "You could paint this mysterious, unattainable man, this wild horse no woman could tame. I'd hate to see you put him in the corral."

In Predock's Nelson Fine Arts Center at Arizona State University, Tempe. "It was starting to look like an animal, so we gave it a tail and a stinger, and nudged it, sending it crawling toward L.A."

Predock's reputation for ambition is in no danger with his peers. Michael Graves began to call him "Antoine Predator" after losing out to him on projects in Las Vegas and Los Alamos. "He's very competitive," says Graves. "And he pretty much owns that region. He'll tell a client that he's the only one who feels the sun and the sand. But I hope you'll convey that I have my tongue in my cheek when I'm saying that."

The rest of the Disneyites, as the other members in the Eisner stable are called, also get in their digs. They make fun of his thick-soled "space shoes" and have nicknamed him "Tony Corona," both for his corona of white hair and because they know he hates being called Tony. "I don't know how he does it," jokes one of them. "He's able to convince these clients that he's the Second Coming. I guess they go for that warmy, feely, touch-me jazz."

"They hate that he can get good jobs," says a New York architecture writer. "They liked it a lot better when he just stayed in Santa Fe, and they could be comfortably condescending." Now that nearly all of Predock's work is outside the desert Southwest, his rivals can only remain hopefully skeptical. "Antoine does not want to be seen as another Paolo Soleri. He knows you can play desert rat only so long," says Peter Eisenman. "But we will have to see what he makes of his dislocation to Los Angeles, to a cosmopolitan, urban career. It is the difference between playing hardball in the big leagues and summer league out in the desert."

This is a critical point in Predock's career. With his numerous projects in California and elsewhere, he is finally in a position to prove that he can in fact leave the desert rat behind, and make work equally rooted in radically different environs. So far, the evidence looks promising: his work in California is markedly different from his sun-scorched, reticent southwestern buildings. One of his first projects was a black, mesh-covered lifeguard tower for the L.A. beaches, built of the tubing used in bicycle frames. "I called it 'the land shark,' " says Predock. "It was no more Mr. Adobe for me. But people complained that you couldn't flirt with the lifeguard. Personally, I think veils are sexy. And I figured you wouldn't have to wear sunglasses. You'd be sitting inside of a pair."

His greatest success so far outside the desert has been the Mandell Weiss Forum, a theater for the La Jolla Playhouse and U.C. San Diego. The theater opened last June with a world-premiere play by Lee Blessing, *Fortinbras*, staged by Playhouse artistic director Des McAnuff, who brought *Big River* to Broadway. The theater ranks among Predock's finest works. Theatergoers approach the building through a grove of eucalyptus trees, crunching over fragrant leaves, often in a thick Pacific mist. Emerging into a clearing, they are confronted with a 272-foot-long mirror, 13 feet high, that reflects the silver trunks of the eucalyptus and the mist and the oncoming crowd. The mirror dematerializes the building, which seems to float like a ship or a whale. "It is about the ritual and ceremony of theater," says Predock. "It's to do with magic, to surrendering to an event. They see their collective and individual reflection there, as a sort of preparation for the profound change that may await them inside." To enter the theater, audience members step through the looking glass, climbing a steel ramp and walking out onto a balcony that seems to hang on glass, or on nothing at all. The theater itself, which McAnuff describes as "a perfect combination of a classical Greek amphitheater and the most high-tech, flexible thrust stage I've ever worked on," is the bruised purple color of dried eucalyptus leaves.

What lies ahead for Predock may carry him even farther from his desert home. He is currently awaiting the King of Morocco's decision on a huge resort on the Atlantic coast, and has been talking to potential clients in South America. And, of course, there is always New York City. Though there is much skepticism that any New York developer, a generally conservative breed, would ever go for Predock, still the idea intrigues, and not long ago he was in fact short-listed to design the south transept of the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine. He is frequently asked whether he would like to do a Manhattan skyscraper, most recently after a lecture he gave to a packed house at New York's Architectural League. His answer to Columbia architecture professor Mary McLeod was, as always, Yes, a high rise in Manhattan would be nice. Well then, said the professor, would you orient it to the phases of the moon? "Could be," said Predock. "You just never know." □

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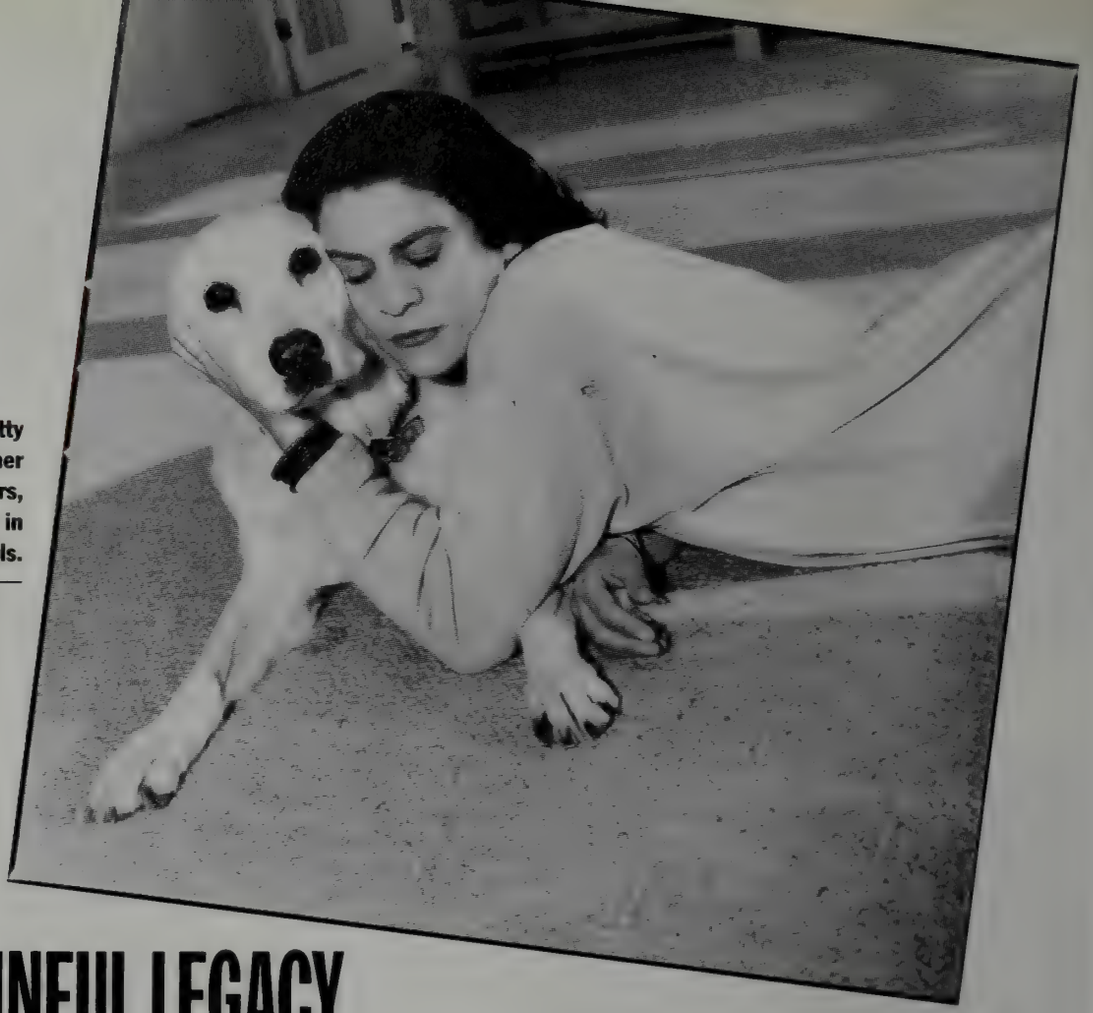


Aileen Getty with Mandy, one of her Labrador retrievers, at home in the Hollywood Hills.

THE GETTYS' PAINFUL LEGACY

The AIDS battle of Aileen Getty, granddaughter of Jean Paul and former daughter-in-law of Elizabeth Taylor, has rocked a family already plagued by sorrow

BY KEVIN SESSUMS

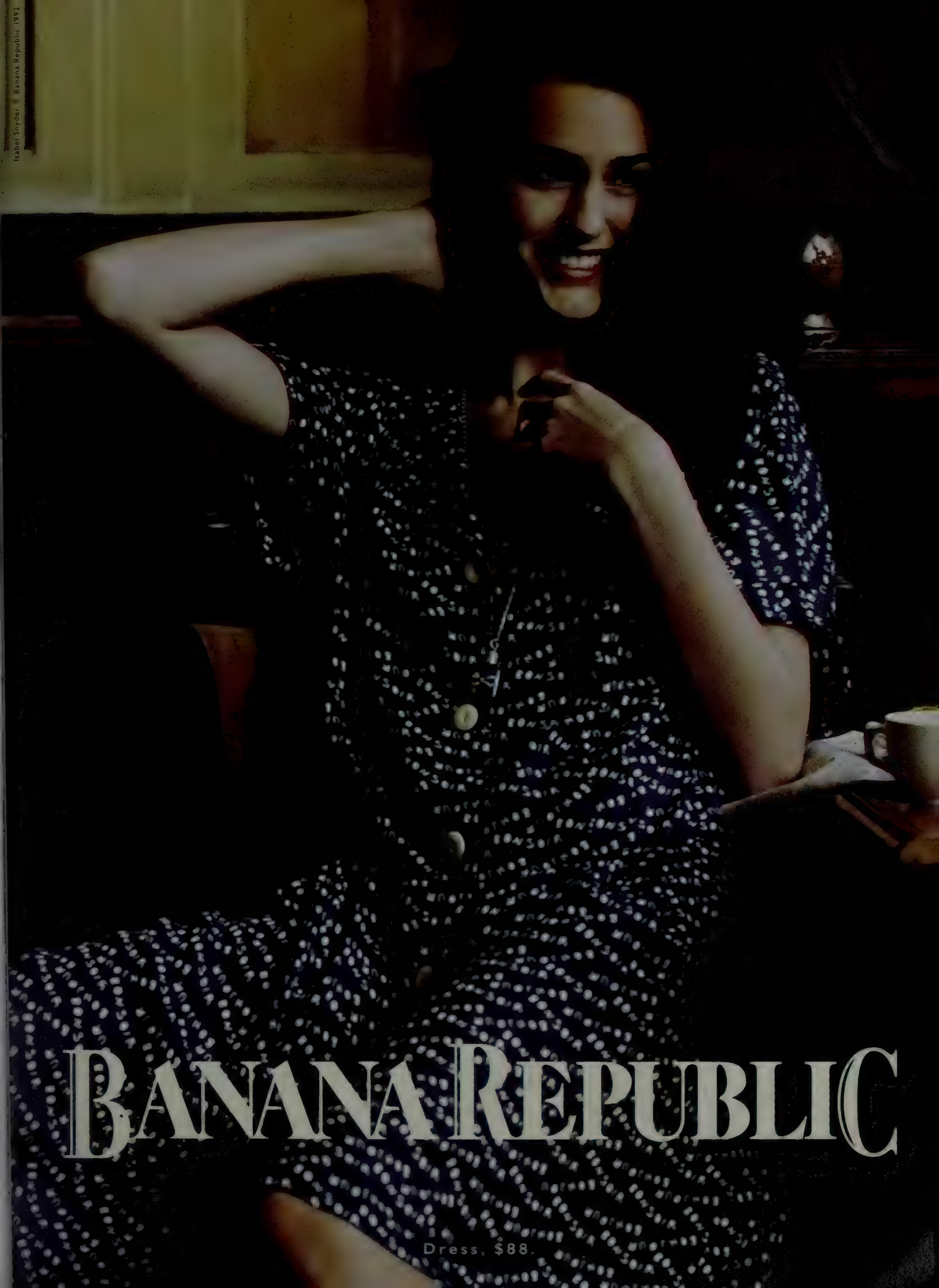
There were seven of us seated at Aileen Getty's Thanksgiving table, high in the Hollywood Hills. A favorite granddaughter of the late oil financier Jean Paul Getty, Aileen is the second child of his fifty-nine-year-old son, Eugene Paul. Her father changed his name to Jean Paul Getty Jr. in 1958, and now, a heroin addict free of heroin, he is a virtual recluse in London, where he lives off the income of the billion-dollar Getty trust, which he had to battle his brother Gordon to get. Thirty-two years old and suffering from AIDS, Aileen Getty was born into a dynasty which, at the beginning of the 1900s, became synonymous with the most American of dreams: hard-won wealth. Now, as the 1900s come to a close, the Gettys are once again serving as a paradigm for America's newest preoccupations: dysfunction and disease.

"I think with this family everything is so mixed up with money that no one can really trust anything," says Gisela Getty, the handsome German who married Aileen's older brother, Jean Paul Getty III, in 1974, when she was twenty-four and he was seventeen. One year earlier, the young heir had been kidnapped in Rome, and his abductors had cut off his right ear in a final desperate act to force his grandfather, who was busy spending millions of dollars on art back in London, to pay $850,000 in ransom. Although Gisela recently divorced J. Paul III, she had cared for him for years after he suffered a debilitating stroke at the age of twenty-five, and she remains close to the family. "There is no one black sheep in this family," she told me, having contemplated the clan since she lived with J. Paul III on the Via della Scala. "We are all black sheep."

Thanksgiving is the most familial of American occasions, but Aileen Getty was alone last November except for her invited guests. Her two children, Caleb, eight, and Andrew, seven, by her ex-husband Christopher Wilding, a son of Elizabeth Taylor, were visiting their paternal grandmother, and her immediate family members were spread around the world. There was, however, one "blood relative" present, a nine-year-old boy named Dallas. Of Aileen's guests that day, five of us were homosexual, yet she, a heterosexual woman apparently infected by a blood transfusion, and the child, infected at birth, were the two people there who had AIDS.

Dallas comes from a well-heeled family himself, one that wears cowboy

MARY ELLEN MARK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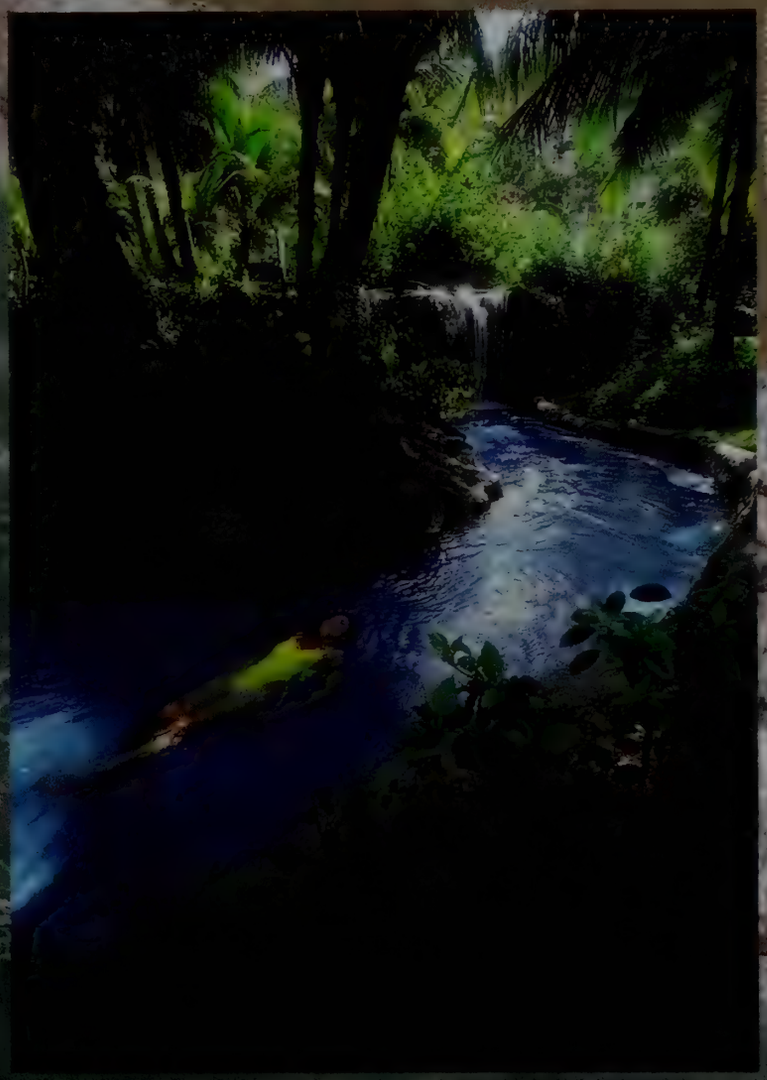

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boots with their three-piece suits. The child's name is purposely meant to evoke southwestern geography, for his great-grandfather was once governor of Texas, yet the family considers Dallas its own black sheep and has largely ignored him. His mother died less than a year ago, after a lengthy bout with AIDS, and his father is now close to death from the disease. Before her death, Dallas's mother made one of Aileen's guests, L.A. artist Mark Lipscomb, his legal guardian. But it is Aileen, though weakened by the disease herself, who has become a substitute mother for him.

"I love Dallas," Aileen told me after dinner as she offered the child some of her extra AZT tablets, one of the few drugs which seem to stave off the progression of AIDS. "He's a special child," she said. "I think I am now the only woman left in his life. He tells me that I remind him of his mom."

Getty's own substitute mom is Elizabeth Taylor. Though the marriage to Taylor's son did not work out, Aileen has remained extremely close to the star. She refers to her natural mom by her first name, Gail, but she reserves the more loving appellation for Taylor. It was on a 1985 fund-raising trip to Paris with Taylor, who is founding national chairman for the American Foundation for AIDS Research (AmFAR), that Aileen became convinced that she had been infected with the human-immunodeficiency virus (H.I.V.), which leads to AIDS. "I was sleeping in the room with Roger [Taylor's beloved late secretary], and I woke up the next morning and was all wet from a bad night sweat.... I was soaking. I turned to Roger that morning and said, 'Roger, you know, I got it.' I was real scared. Roger said, 'No, no, no, no, no.' But I knew it." After her diagnosis, Aileen was panic-stricken over her condition, and Taylor, who had just suffered the loss of her great friend Rock Hudson to the disease, allowed her to move into her Bel-Air mansion. At that time, Aileen was so frightened that she would crawl into bed with Taylor at night, and, forming an American Pietà of fame and fortune, the world's favorite movie star would cradle one of the world's richest heiresses until they both could fall asleep.

Even though Taylor's relationship with Aileen has been a complicated one because of her son's legal battles to gain custody of Andrew and Caleb, she has remained stalwart in her support as far as the illness is concerned. Aileen, like her father, has had a history of drug abuse, though her drug of choice was cocaine, not heroin. She finally agreed to submit to scheduled urine tests, and she and Wilding now have an amicable arrangement to share the children on a weekly basis. A few months ago, however, a bit of tension arose when the supermarket tabloids printed stories regarding Aileen's AIDS fight and Taylor's purported hysteria over the health of her grandsons.

"I love Aileen," Taylor told me. "I've always loved Aileen. I always will love Aileen. This is her story, but I feel I have to respect and protect the privacy of my grandsons. I will always be here for Aileen. I have kept this issue private and confidential and between us for years, and that's the way I would prefer it to stay."

"The worst symptom of AIDS is denial," Aileen told me at Thanksgiving to explain why she had decided to go public with her disease and talk to me. Her voice was gravelly, grave. There had recently been an outbreak of painful blisters inside her mouth, which caused her to sound like the lockjawed lady her family has always wished she could be. "AIDS is less deadly than denial, as far as I'm concerned," she insisted. "I don't think this is a disease you survive in any way, shape, or form without others. And I don't think that others—the parents and the families and the lovers and the friends—can survive the issue within themselves unless they can bond with the patient."

"There is no one black sheep in this family," Gisela Getty told me. "We are all black sheep."

"Bond" has usually been a noun in the Getty household, seldom a verb, so it is no surprise that the person with whom Aileen seems to have bonded the most is her newest acquaintance, nine-year-old Dallas. He quietly excused himself from the Thanksgiving table, and Aileen soon followed after him. She smiled when I knocked at the door of her tiny study, where she was teaching him how to fashion a fish by folding a piece of paper. The walls were plastered with snapshots and mementos. In one photo, Aileen posed with Jesse Jackson on the night of the 1988 California primary. In another, Timothy Leary motioned in mid-speech at a campus forum. Most of the photos, however, were of Andrew and Caleb. The many notes that they have written to their mother throughout her illness were also posted all over the walls. DEAR MOMMY, began one, I WISH I COULD BUY YOU A BUNNY AS A PRESENT. I LOVE YOU SO MUCH. SMOOCH SMOOCH SMOOCH.

"What's that?" I asked, pointing to a primitive drawing of two large ships taped to the wall beneath a poem by Aileen entitled "Retrovirus," which she had carefully typed for display. Each ship in the drawing contained two stick figures stowed away below.

"That's a drawing Dallas did when he spent the night with me recently," Aileen told me, and lovingly looked at the boy. The dying, like family, simply belong to each other: one ship contained Lipscomb and his longtime friend, the other held Dallas and Aileen.

"Why does yours have a helicopter over it?" I asked. "It's even got a ladder dangling down toward the two of you."

"Want to tell him, Dallas?"

Dallas shyly shook his head no. Aileen started to tell me, but erupted in a coughing seizure.

Dallas looked up from the sharp-edged fish. His childish voice was full of reason and hope. "It's there so when we have to, we can...you know...escape."

There is no escaping the destiny of the Getty dynasty. Aileen Getty's battle against AIDS is just the latest chapter in a family saga replete with tragedies so extreme that a Puccini could have scored them—or perhaps a Getty. Aileen's uncle Gordon, her father's brother, who is married to the publisher Ann Getty and lives in San Francisco, is an eccentrically accomplished composer and has been quite supportive during her AIDS fight. His suite of musical compositions based on Emily Dickinson's poems on death and desolation could indeed have served as a prelude to his niece's current plight. "I love Gordon," Aileen said, smiling at the mention of her uncle's name. "Gordon is great...he just stays in his room and writes music and is happy as can be. He's just a great guy and very, very different. Very different from my father. They're total opposites. Gordon is light, and my father is the dark side."

"In terms of personalities, the brothers are quite different," confirms Judge

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YVES SAINT LAURENT

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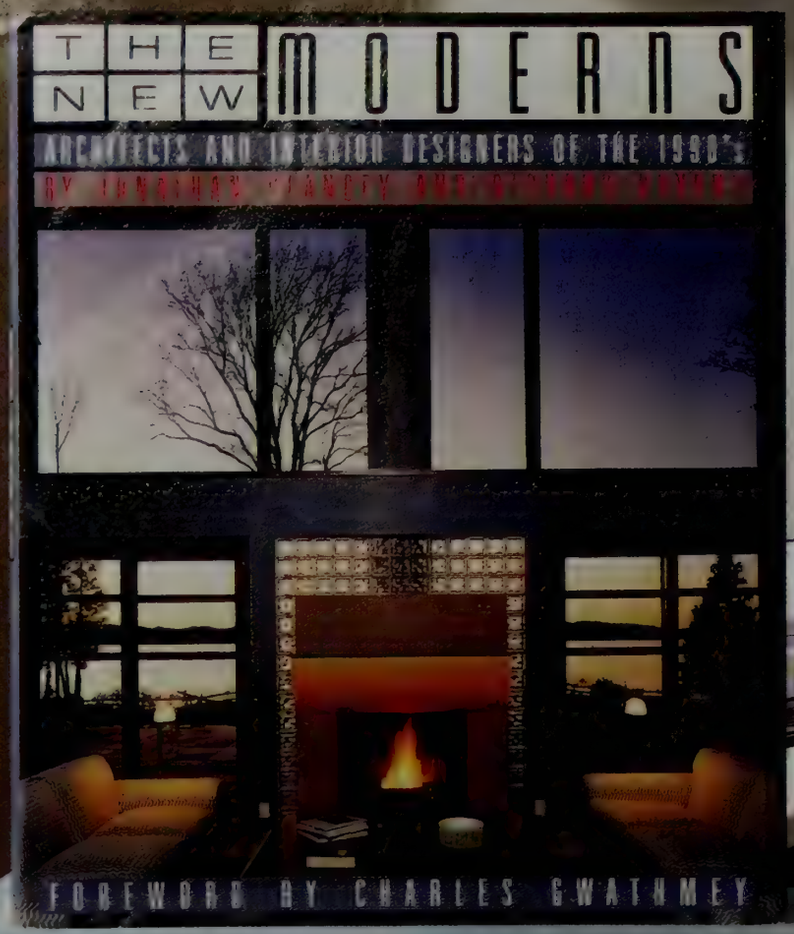

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William Newsom, who serves on the California Court of Appeals. Newsom has known J. Paul junior and Gordon since childhood, and has always been the Getty-family troubleshooter. Whether working out the details of J. Paul junior's divorce from Aileen's mother, Gail, so that Paul could marry the flamboyantly beautiful Talitha Pol, who died of a heroin overdose in Italy in 1971, or dealing with the kidnapping of his godson, J. Paul III, Judge Newsom has been the person the family calls on when a "father figure" is needed. It is certainly needed now, and Newsom tells me, appropriately enough, about a business transaction involving the far-flung family members as proof of their renewed emotional health. "We're all taking a trip to South Africa. Mark Getty, Aileen's younger brother, who works for Hambro in London, and to whom Gordon is extremely close, is putting together an investment in connection with the African National Congress and the current South African government. It involves building a hotel for game-viewing guests in a pristine area of South Africa. The local tribesmen will run the hotel, run the buses, etc. It is a money-making project, but, more importantly, it carries with it a concession from the government of rights to a vast wildlife habitat of several hundred thousand acres. This ties into the family's historic involvement with environmental and conservation causes. Gordon funds the J. Paul Getty wildlife prize, and the daughters of his late brother George are big donors to conservation causes. Involved in this South African project are Gordon's own boys, led by Peter, who is the oldest—about twenty-six or so now. So that's one part of the family. Christopher Getty is also involved. He is an extremely capable young guy, about twenty-six or twenty-seven, and is the oldest child of Ronald [another of J. Paul Getty's sons, who was virtually disinherited because of the demands made by his German mother during her divorce from J. Paul, but whose children have been provided for]. Christopher runs the Ronald Getty Family Trust. What I'm saying is that I see this family coming together in a lot of ways. I see the tragic parts of it being in the past. Things have really turned around."

Aileen was so frightened that she would crawl into bed with Taylor, and the world's favorite movie star would cradle one of the world's richest heiresses.

Elizabeth Taylor celebrates the engagement of her son Christopher Wilding to Aileen Getty in 1980.

Judge Newsom returns to the most famous surviving Gettys: "Paul is more reserved; Gordon is more outgoing. Gordon is more in the world; Paul is much more private. But they both have an intense interest in, and an encyclopedic knowledge of, music. Both would go anywhere anytime to hear a great tenor sing. They do have that in common. In the worst, most acrimonious days of their lives, they could still pick up the phone and say, 'Hey! Did you hear Domingo sing in Madrid the other night? He was fabulous!' "

The acrimony stemmed from the legal battles J. Paul junior waged against Gordon when the latter was left in charge of the Sarah C. Getty Trust, the sizable remainder of their father's estate left for the family to squabble over after the old man had endowed the J. Paul Getty Museum in Malibu as his real legacy to the world. (Plans were revealed last October for a second project, the $360 million Getty Center, designed by Richard Meier and slated to open in 1996 atop the Santa Monica Mountains in Brentwood, California.) Modeled after the Villa dei Papiri, which stood on the slopes of Mount Vesuvius in the first century, the J. Paul Getty Museum is tied into the billionaire's secret belief that he was the reincarnation of the culturally sophisticated Roman emperor Hadrian.

J. Paul junior used his son by Talitha Pol—Tara Gabriel Galaxy Gramophone Getty, now a dashing twentysomething boy-about-London—as the litigant in the case against his brother, and was successful in dividing up the family fortune in a more equitable manner. (The fortune actually increased in value during the family's fight over it, when Texaco took over the Getty enterprises for $10 billion.) After winning his rightful share, J. Paul junior stunned the art world of Britain in the 1980s with a donation of approximately $63 million to the National Gallery. He has also set up a charitable trust for social, medical, and environmental causes.

Though Aileen is not aware of any sizable donations to AIDS charities, Judge Newsom insists that her father has given generously to medical research for an AIDS cure. She is, however, quite specific about her father's penuriousness when it comes to her more immediate medical bills. Just as he had to be sued by Gail to pay J. Paul III's medical bills after the young man's stroke, he also had to be urged to help pay his daughter's mounting bills, which, according to Judge Newsom, he is finally doing. "There have been a few times that I have been struck that I haven't really had the money for medicine or some kinds of treatment I haven't been able to follow through on," Aileen claims. "It has struck me as certainly very odd."

The Getty lineage has been filled with extravagant wealth and extravagant sorrow; it has by turns been greedy and generous, loving and aloof, sober and debauched. J. Paul Getty forever grieved for his youngest and favorite son, the sickly Timothy, who died in 1958 when only twelve years old, and he never recovered from the 1973 suicide of his handpicked successor, his eldest son, George, who was the namesake of Getty's own, beloved, but distant father. However, the old man needed only to look back at his heritage—post-Hadrian—to understand the Getty willpower, which enabled him to carry on, a salient family attribute that has kept his granddaughter alive.

The Gettys have been in turmoil since James Getty immigrated to America from County Londonderry, Ireland, in

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1780 and bought from the heirs of William Penn the land which would become known as Gettysburg. A decade later his two cousins John and William Getty followed. William headed for Kentucky, and was never heard from again, but John became one of the first settlers of Allegany County, Maryland, where he married and became a prosperous farmer until his wife's death. Left with three children to raise—James, Polly, and Joseph—and bereft at the loss of his spouse, John Getty became the town drunk, thus initiating a long succession of Getty men and women who would find solace in alcohol and, later, drugs.

After their father died from a fall from a horse in 1830, the three Getty children were left penniless, but somehow managed to rise above their station, and all three made successful marriages. It was James, John's elder son, who gave the world the Getty dynasty we know today. James and his wife had three sons, each of whom went on to a successful career. The youngest, John Getty, who wanted nothing more than to be a farmer, moved to Ohio with his wife, Martha, a schoolteacher and a minister's daughter. Their first child, George Franklin Getty, was born within the year. Three more children rapidly followed, but at the age of twenty-six John died of diphtheria, leaving Martha impoverished, with four children, all under the age of six.

George Getty, even in his childhood, worked in the fields in order for his mother and his siblings to survive. Finally, an uncle sent for him and paid for his education in Ohio. At university he met Sarah Catherine McPherson Risher and married her after graduation. Within a year, she gave birth to their first child, a daughter, Gertrude Lois.

George taught for a short time, but ultimately gave in to Sarah's insistence that he study to be a lawyer, and he eventually became quite a success in Minneapolis, where he specialized in insurance and corporate law. In 1890, just as their lives seemed secure, a typhoid epidemic carried off their adored daughter. The couple seemed inconsolable until Sarah became pregnant again at the age of thirty-nine. In 1892 she gave birth to a healthy boy, Jean Paul Getty, who, by the time of his death at the age of eighty-four in 1976, had built his father's later ventures in the nascent crude-oil business into a conglomerate that caused headlines to hail him as "the richest man in the world."

"I knew him very well," Aileen says, remembering the many weekends she spent with her grandfather at his London estate when she'd return from boarding school as a girl. "He was a *good guy*. Actually, funny enough, he was one of the more nurturing members of the family. You don't expect that, but I have more solid memories about him as far as feelings of family and interest in family. I would spend time there at his house when I would get in trouble at my father's and I would be sent to my grandfather's. He had lions as pets in big, big, big cages, and I would play with them. Then they had babies, and I was the first one to be shown the cubs when they were born. They were brought up to my room one at a time." She smiles at the memory, then adds, "He also had eight or ten pretty vicious dogs. Well, I mean they were really sweet, because dogs are sweet no matter what, but they bit. They were Alsatians. You know, those *German* dogs."

J. Paul made quite an entrance at his father's funeral, when he arrived wearing bright-yellow shoes and with Bianca Jagger on his arm.

In 1959, J. Paul Getty, whose love of Europe had been nurtured by his father on frequent trips to the Continent in the early part of the century, had chosen to settle down near a European capital after years of living out of hotel rooms. He was, after all, sixty-six years old. While residing at London's Ritz Hotel, he was invited to a dinner party by the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland at Sutton Place, their country estate in Surrey. Sutton Place—all seventy-two rooms of it—was considered England's finest example of Tudor architecture, but the duke, who was having financial difficulties, confided to Getty over dinner that he would like to sell the place. Getty's first home in New York had been a penthouse on Sutton Place, and he was immediately taken with the symmetry such a purchase would provide in his life. He bought the house and its sixty-acre park for a little less than £65,000.

Aileen's most vivid memory of her grandfather is his funeral in Mayfair. "I was fifteen or sixteen, and I cried a lot at his funeral. A lot. I was always afraid of acknowledging others' deaths too much, because I was afraid it would hurt me in such a way that perhaps I would lose control. I cry very easily. I also remember being embarrassed, I must say, because my father was late for the funeral. Very late." J. Paul junior did indeed make quite an entrance that afternoon, when he arrived wearing bright-yellow shoes and with Bianca Jagger on his arm.

Aileen's father inherited his own father's love of England, if not his business acumen. Although he cloistered himself in his home on Cheyne Walk in a drug-induced haze after the tragic death of his beloved Talitha, he has recently re-emerged to some extent from his reclusive past. "He is very intelligent, very bright, very witty, but also very much in his own world," says Gisela Getty. "I don't think he really likes to deal with family matters." Like his father before him, he has turned his attention to the creature comforts his wealth can provide. He has, for example, just finished building a library at Wormsley Hall, his estate forty miles outside London, for his collection of four thousand incunabula, the world's largest and most valuable, which includes a Magna Charta of 1215, the Paris Psalter of 1230, and the scant remaining pages of a *Life of Thomas à Becket*. A cricket aficionado, he not only is a major donor to the Marylebone Cricket Club but also is putting the finishing touches on the field he has had constructed at Wormsley, where he plans to hold matches to benefit his favorite charities.

Why this onetime rebel's dotty Anglophilia?

Judge Newsom: "He's read too much Trollope."

Before he could retreat into the parlored life of the ersatz English, J. Paul junior, at his father's insistence that he run a family business in Italy in the late fifties, settled his then wife, Gail, and his children, J. Paul III, Aileen, Ariadne, and Mark, in Rome. "Those were tough, tough, tough years," Aileen says of the time associated with her brother's kidnapping. "I was always a pretty serious, quiet kid. I didn't play much. I read a lot and liked to

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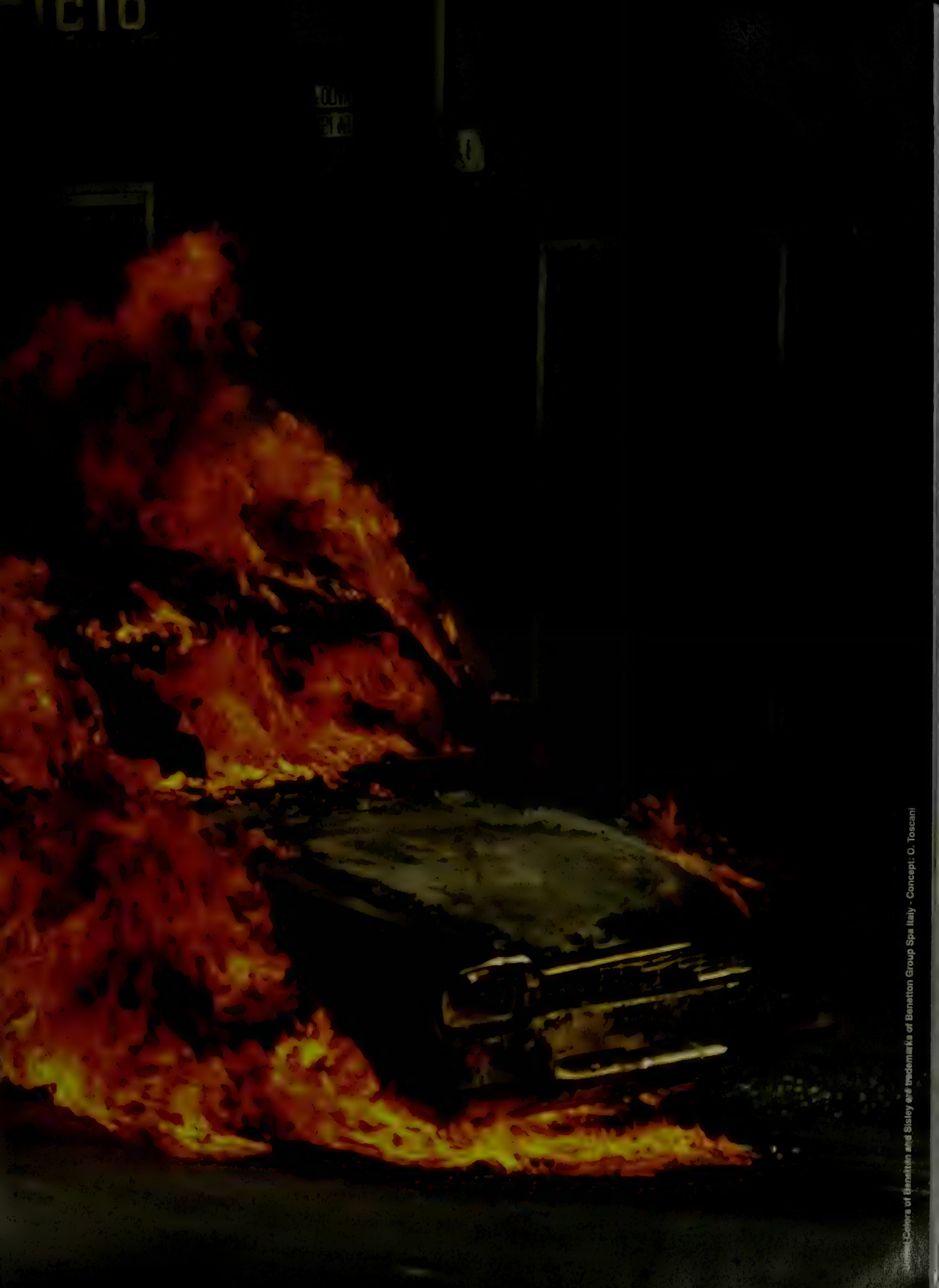

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plus with paper—just shuffling and touching paper. . . . We lived twenty minutes away from Siena, on top of a mountain. The closest thing to us was a little village called Orgia. We only had electricity by generator, and for hot water we had to light this gas thing. There wasn't even a telephone."

Getty's younger sister, Ariadne Getty Williams, now an architectural photographer, remembers Aileen as "actually the quietest of us all. She was the most feminine. She was very delicate. Very, very beautiful. Very girl-like. I was very tomboyish, and always with Paul and Mark. Aileen was the one that was always helping my mom in the kitchen."

Now delicate from disease, but no longer "the most feminine," Aileen somewhere in her life turned into a hoyden with a wild streak as big as her family's bank account. Indeed, pugnacious and disturbingly pretty, she bears an uncanny resemblance to the young Robert Mapplethorpe. ("The first time I saw her," recalls a good friend, "I thought she was this really cute Italian street boy.") When—and how—did such a dramatic change in her appearance and attitude take place? "She has a history of drug use, and I think all those types of things harden you," says Ariadne, who has been the most understanding of any of the family members regarding her sister's AIDS fight. "I think drugs create new realities. Especially cocaine, because it is such an insidious, strong, character-changing drug. I also think Aileen—like everybody—has had tough knocks in life, and you sort of build your walls up. Aileen has built several walls."

In her teens, Aileen was sent to London to live with her father, who was divorced from her mother. He, in turn, shipped her off to a small finishing school, Hatchlands, which was near her grandfather's estate and had an enrollment that consisted almost entirely of Iranian princesses. "It was near Guildford, in Surrey, in a beautiful Robert Adam home," she says. "I learned how to curtsy to the Queen and how to fence. Mr. and Mrs. Hargreaves were the director and his wife. He'd come down to dinner every night wearing a tuxedo, and would eat an entire cauliflower and a half a roast beef. We had nail checks three times a day. I was not ready for this school: I didn't have nails to check! The headmistress would bang on the table and scream, 'Entertain me!' Of course, no girls spoke English there but myself, so I was the one who always ended up having to carry on about something. I'd make up stories to tell the Iranian girls. . . . My father got really alarmed at the sum of money that the school cost when he got my report card and the subjects started out with contract bridge and flower arranging. *Say what?* But they did introduce us to the boys in the nearby military school. We weren't allowed to play backgammon—only the boys were. And they could drink port. Needless to say, I did not do very well at this school. I had a big alcohol den in my room with the Iranian girls. I had a weekly pass to London, so I would go and pick up bottles. That's about it for my education. . . . I stopped school pretty early, probably at about thirteen and a half, maybe fifteen. . . . My first school was Italian, and I won an award from the president of Italy for writing an essay on *risparmio,* which means 'the saving of money.' I was all of six years old." She laughs. "I guess it's a genetic thing."

"The tabloids totally trashed me. I thought, Fuck that. I'm alive. I'm a fucking living miracle, man. What am I ashamed about?"

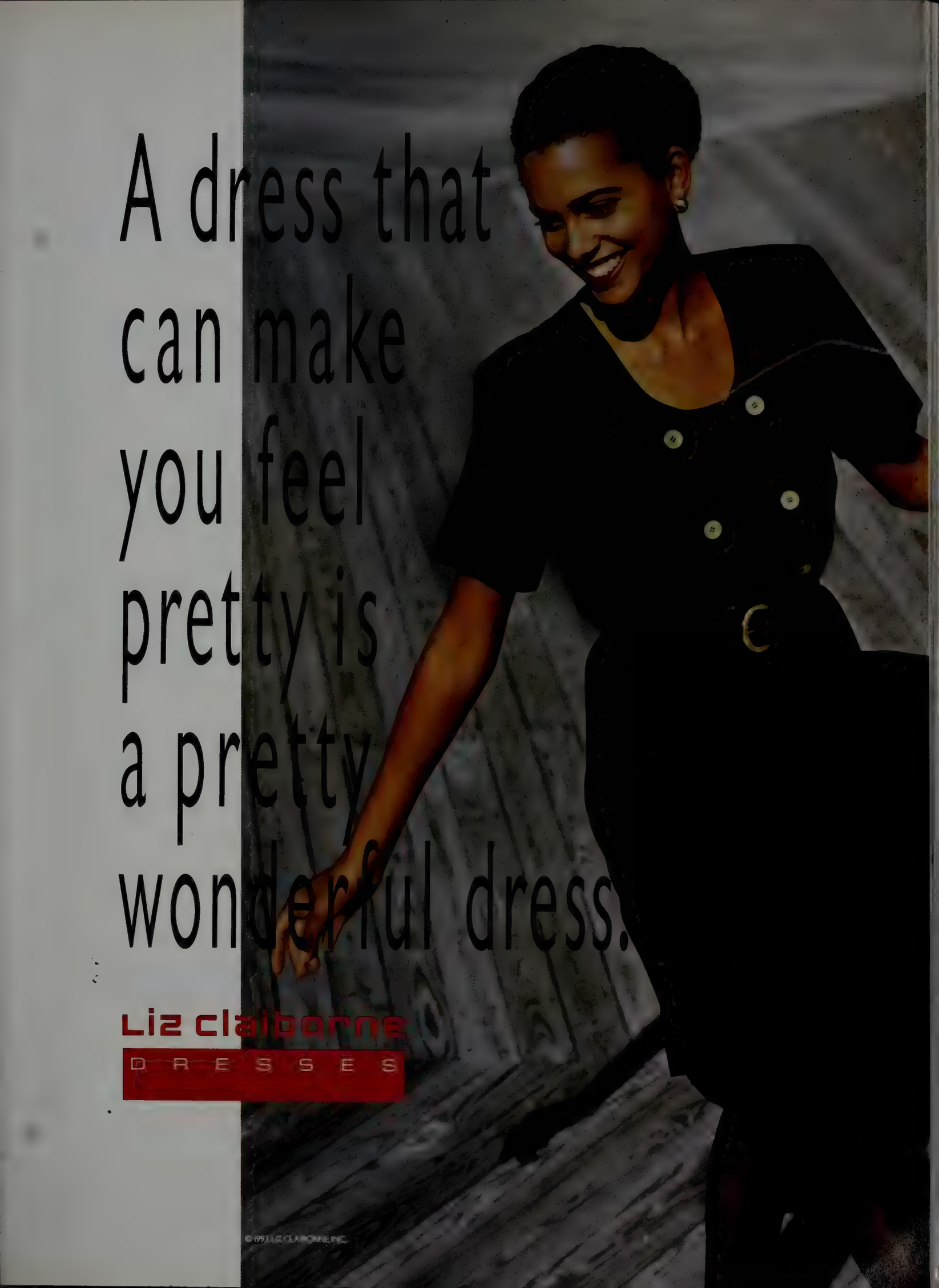
Aileen's black-sheep status in her family preceded her infection with AIDS, owing to her drug use—a family weakness. She has been in and out of cocaine rehabilitation clinics several times over the years, the last visit resulting in a three-week marriage to a man she met while recovering. Currently sober, she has also suffered repeated mental problems, and freely admits that she has had "a few visits in psych wards—and not with patients. I've had twelve shock treatments. Not because I've needed them, mind you, but because I have something wrong with my temporal lobes. They're not normal, which means without certain medications my brain doesn't function properly. I was willing to go to the hospital, but. . . yeah, I was put in a few times. Chris put me in a few times. I had a lot of serious problems with panic disorders. I would have very serious panic. I would have hallucinations at times. I had a few nervous breakdowns—quite a few."

I am visiting Aileen on another occasion at her Hollywood Hills home, and today she is having trouble moving around. Another of the manifestations of AIDS that she suffers from is a condition known as neuropathy, which is characterized by extensive nerve degeneration and is physically disabling. "It's real painful," she admits. "Sometimes I have problems walking. I have problems with the brain and stuff, too. It's real painful, because the nerves are exposed. . . . If I hold a cold drink, I feel like I'm on fire. And I fall. I fall a lot. There are periods when I'm in a wheelchair."

The jumble of Getty's house mirrors her scattered, childlike manner. In addition to her children's prominently displayed artwork, there are examples of her own attempts at agitprop. (During the opening of her 1990 show at L.A.'s Zero One Gallery on Melrose Avenue, her work so incensed one critic that he threw a brick through the gallery's front window.) The phrase "Death Row" appears throughout her work, stenciled on pieces of wood. Words by Edgar Allan Poe are written on an American flag. Deconstructed articles from her favorite magazine, *Covert Action Information Bulletin,* are also framed as art, and hang alongside framed letters from doctors and lawyers admonishing her for her bad behavior—as if they, too, were works to be contemplated and easily ridiculed.

Pets have the run of the house. An albino cockatiel sits inside an opened cage, its wings accidentally clipped too close and a bit of blood scabbing on its feathers, while its mate flies about and alights on the foot of Getty's bed, where she sleeps with her three dogs and two sons. Mandy, her eldest dog, a listless eleven-year-old Lab, lies on the cool tiles in the kitchen and ignores the newest, a mutt named Mickey, who stands on his hind legs in one of the many windows and yelps at the distant lights of L.A. The third dog, a six-month-old Lab pup called Mona da Vinci, sashays around the cluttered rooms.

Though her modest house is far removed from the Sutton Place manor she visited so often as a child, Aileen is cognizant of her family's mystique because of its wealth and the decadent dimensions of its tragedies. "I've always been aware of it," she admits, "but it's not a choice of mine to live within that are-


A dress that
can make
you feel
pretty is
a pretty
wonderful dress.
Liz claiborne
DRESSES

... Recently, however, she has become a member of the latest celebrity category: H.I.V.I.P.'s, those who, because of their magical media-friendliness, make this most tragic of diseases somehow hip. "I do have times when it gives me, maybe, some inkling of figuring out why I was born a Getty—so maybe I could do this," she says, realizing the seriousness of the situation. "That this is some way I could serve. And then I do feel well about myself, and the disease doesn't hurt."

Most members of Aileen Getty's family aren't so sanguine about her going public with her disease. Last October her father, for the first time in several years, invited the family, including Gail, to spend a few days with him in London, and even insisted Aileen come back for Christmas, something she was unable to do, because such a long trip is excruciatingly painful. Though J. Paul junior is seriously attempting a rapprochement with his daughter, after his long absence from her life, he has become increasingly press-shy, and will not publicly discuss her disease.

"Her father called me," recalls Judge Newsom. "I don't mind telling you this, because I'm a very close and old friend. He asked me to come over. He said, 'Bill, you're not going to believe what's happened.' I had heard some rumors, but it was the first time he had really grasped it. He asked me to come over because I think he just needed some consolation. He's been devastated by it. . . . Maybe it's because he's had some adversity himself, but her father is profoundly sympathetic at this point."

Gail, who by all accounts has been a model mother to her children, steadfastly refuses to comment on her daughter's disease, even though both Aileen and Ariadne have pleaded with her to do so. "I've been burned a few times," Gail tells me when I telephone J. Paul III's house to request an interview. His nurse passes the phone to Gail, and she tells me that to attempt an interview over the phone with her son would be ill-advised because of his condition. I ask her if she herself would not reconsider and grant an interview about her daughter's brave battle against AIDS. "I've made it a policy never, never, never to talk to the press," she pleasantly insists.

"Not even for something as important as this?" I ask.

"Especially for something as important as this," she says. "There are ways that I can be of help other than giving an interview."

Los Angeles judicial commissioner John Ladner, one of Aileen's closest friends, attempts to explain the family's reluctance to discuss Aileen's illness. "I think part of this peculiarity has to do with the fact that, as fortunate as this family is financially, there has been really a lot of tragedy, to the point that I believe that one reaches one's capacity, and then one begins to build up defenses," he says. "One reaches a capacity for absorbing tragedy so that when yet another horrible event occurs—as Aileen's illness is—then it may make it more difficult for them to deal with it."

Ultimately, Aileen Getty's children are her greatest source of comfort. They are the real family members that sustain her. "One of the things that has happened as a result of her illness is that she's now a much better mother than she ever was. She worships those children," says Judge Newsom. "They are the absolute center of her life."

"I do have times when it gives me, maybe, some inkling of figuring out why I was born a Getty. This is some way I could serve."

Aileen suffered seven miscarriages before she and Christopher Wilding adopted Caleb, when he was only twenty-two hours old. "I lactated with him for a year, but I couldn't breast-feed, because I was on medication. Then I got pregnant with Andrew, but I started to lose him, so I lay down for three and a half months. One night Chris and Mom [Elizabeth Taylor] and I went out to see *Purple Rain*. I wasn't supposed to get up, but we just had to see Prince! So we snuck into the movie, and the next morning it was AGHHHHHHH! I had him the next day."

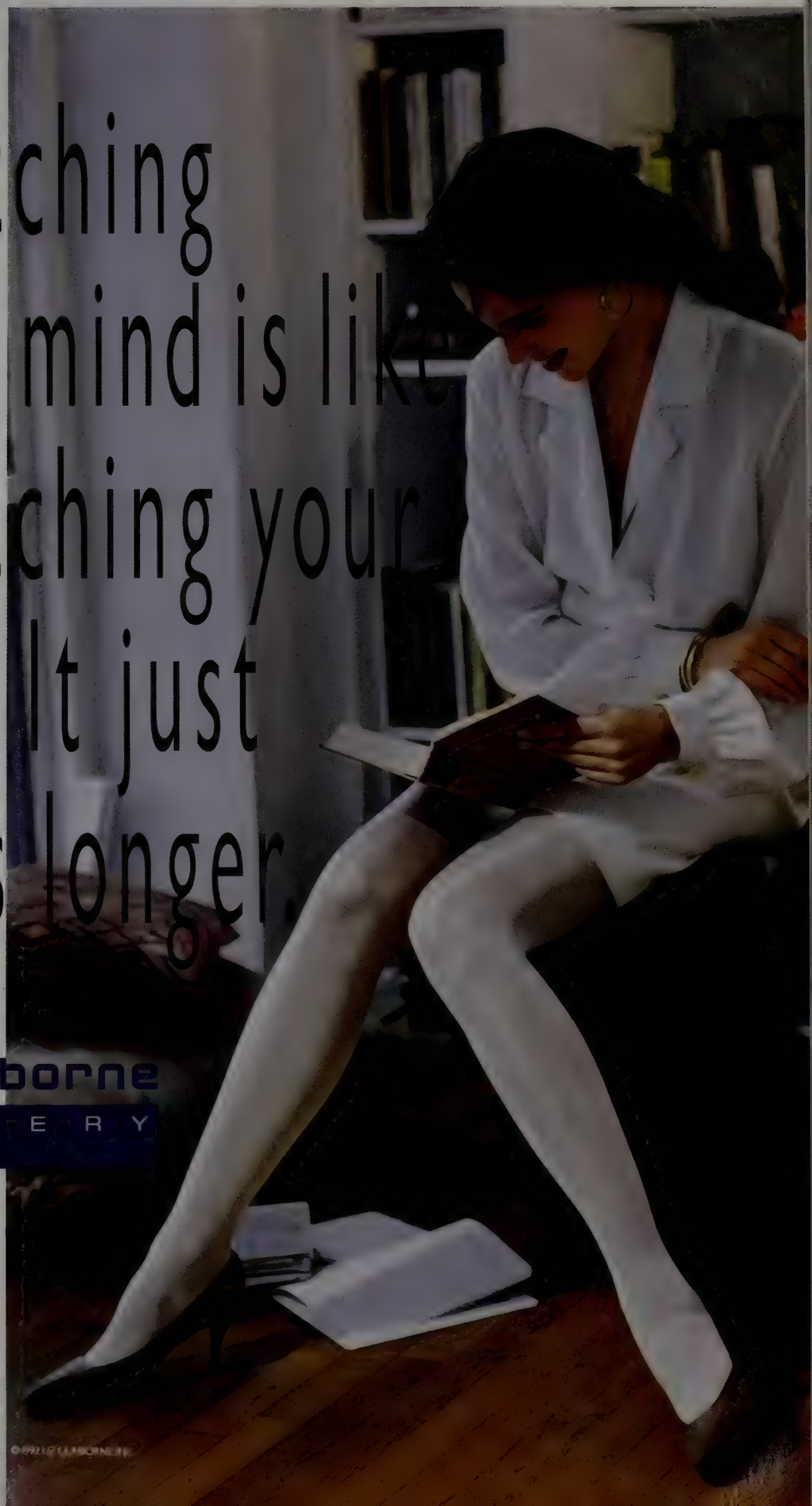
Taylor and her son accompanied Aileen into the delivery room. Aileen was extremely close to Taylor's ex-husband Richard Burton (Andrew's middle name is Richard), and she swears that Burton, who had recently died, was also present in the delivery room. "I think I actually talked to him when I was having Andrew. I sensed his presence. I talked out loud to him. Mom and Chris were aware of it, too. I don't know," she says, shaking her head and laughing, "maybe I have too much H.I.V. of the brain!"

Andrew's delivery seems to have been her only good experience in a hospital. Not only does she believe she acquired the AIDS virus through a transfusion during surgery, but she also has been denied treatment at an L.A. hospital because of her condition. "There's definitely not the same response to women with this disease," claims Getty. "I just haven't found that the medical care is very caring about women with AIDS."

In fact, heterosexual women are the fastest-growing AIDS demographic group, yet women are likely to manifest symptoms of AIDS differently. Their H.I.V. problems tend to be gynecological in nature—chronic yeast infections, for instance—but the Centers for Disease Control bases its definition of AIDS on studies originally made of homosexual men. Therefore, most of the infections caused by H.I.V. that women get are not included in the C.D.C. list. This results in slower diagnoses for women, a greater percentage of early deaths, and a denial of many disability benefits, since eligibility hinges on the C.D.C. definition.

"When women do get paid attention to in the AIDS crisis, it is usually as vectors of transmission," says Monica Pearl, an AIDS activist involved with women's issues who also co-authored the book *Women, AIDS & Activism* (South End Press) with others in the ACT UP/New York Women and AIDS Book Group. "At the last International AIDS Conference, any panel or topic of interest that had to do with women was about women as prostitutes or childbearers. There is this concern that women are passing on H.I.V. to someone else, which means that if they're passing it on, then they have it themselves. The one phrase that really bugs me is when people say 'women in their childbearing years,' because it is the leading killer for women ages twenty-five to thirty-four in New York. But people say 'childbearing years' as though we are concerned for all those potential children who are going to be H.I.V.-infected without thinking that for every H.I.V.-infected child there is an H.I.V.-infected mother."

Getty's children have consistently tested negative for the virus, as has Christopher Wilding. Getty has been


Stretching
your mind is like
stretching your
legs. It just
takes longer.
Liz claiborne
HOSIERY

quite honest with her sons concerning her illness. "They are aware of everything," she says. "Actually, they are more capable of understanding and being freer with the knowledge than any adult. They are able to respond in a lot more honest way. I only told them after I became full-blown. One of the reasons I told them was that I was pretty sick at the time and I was always in bed. I didn't want them to feel responsible for my being in bed, because kids will feel responsible for their parents' being sick, as if their actions are causing that to happen. So I wanted them to know that it had nothing to do with them, and that it was independent of them. I told them that it was AIDS. And that there wasn't a cure."

Why has she chosen, after seven years, to go public with her disease? "It deserves respect; it deserves its place. I deserve it. And I don't want a bunch of people speaking for me when I can speak perfectly well for myself and bring it the dignity it deserves. I guess what stopped me for so long is that I've just been so fearful because of the intolerance. I've just been so fearful for my children's sake, mostly—so that they wouldn't have to suffer any of the consequences."

Unlike last year's media-appointed poster heterosexual for AIDS, Kimberly Bergalis, who flatly stated at a congressional hearing before her death, "I didn't do anything wrong," as opposed to many others with the disease, Aileen does not think it is important how one contracts H.I.V. "If you got it, you got it," she says, shrugging her shoulders. "Actually, I don't really want to know for certain how I got it. That's so cruel. I never shot up, so I didn't get it that way. I mean, if you got it from a transfusion, it's more O.K. to get it? It's like, 'Oh! Your disease, it's all right. Here's a pat on the back.' 'You got it from shooting up? Then fuck you!' "

She sounds as if she has never had any shame associated with the illness. "Oh, I've felt so aware of the shame," she says, lowering her already gravelly voice to a growl as she remembers the way the tabloids handled her story last December. "Tabloids work on shame. First of all, they totally trashed me. They bring all the rubbish in. So I felt shame about every part of my life. They bring in the shock treatments and the psych wards and the drugs and the AIDS. I thought, Well, shit, just a second. Fuck that. I'm alive. I'm a fucking living miracle, man. What am I ashamed about?"

Her proud anger, however, gives way to maternal tenderness, which has begun to ache inside her these last few months with a pain even greater than that of the dread neuropathy. "I love my children like nothing else in life. I know they need me. . . but. . . I need them more."

Suddenly, for the first time, there are tears. "I just don't want to leave them." Would she have survived this long without Andrew and Caleb? "No-o-o. Thank God for them, because they push me at times when nothing else can push me. I get up to feed *them* when I can't feed myself." She pauses and, wiping the tears away, calls on the crude resolve which has never failed a Getty. Fueled with it, she continues. "I'll never forget this feeling: I was about eight or nine myself, and I was with my mother in a car on the Via Veneto in Rome. My brothers and sister were in the car, too. I asked my mother about when she was going to die, and I flipped out crying and screaming. I promised that when she died, then I was going to die, that I couldn't live without my mother. The very thought of my mother dying was more than I could cope with. I think that for a child there cannot be anything worse. Fortunately, they feel comfortable enough to talk to me. I've tried very, very hard not to be elusive about anything and have some great mysterious death come into their lives. If there is a question about death, then ask it. With AIDS, we're all having to learn these new social skills of how to say good-bye to people. We are not as a species really aware or capable of acknowledging somebody else's death before it takes place."

An example: During World AIDS Day in December, two of Aileen's adored siblings, Ariadne and J. Paul III, watched a television documentary, *Suzi's Story*, which involved a young Australian woman's unsuccessful fight against AIDS. "We were sobbing, it was so sad," Ariadne told me later, but also confessed that she has never once mentioned Aileen's illness to her brother, because of his "tender" condition. Aileen insists, however, that Paul has a complete understanding of her illness and, because of his own afflictions, has been quite supportive in his own way. Was Ariadne telling me that she and her brother sat sobbing side by side and never once admitted that they were really crying for their sister, Aileen?

"Never," she said softly. "Isn't it incredible?" □

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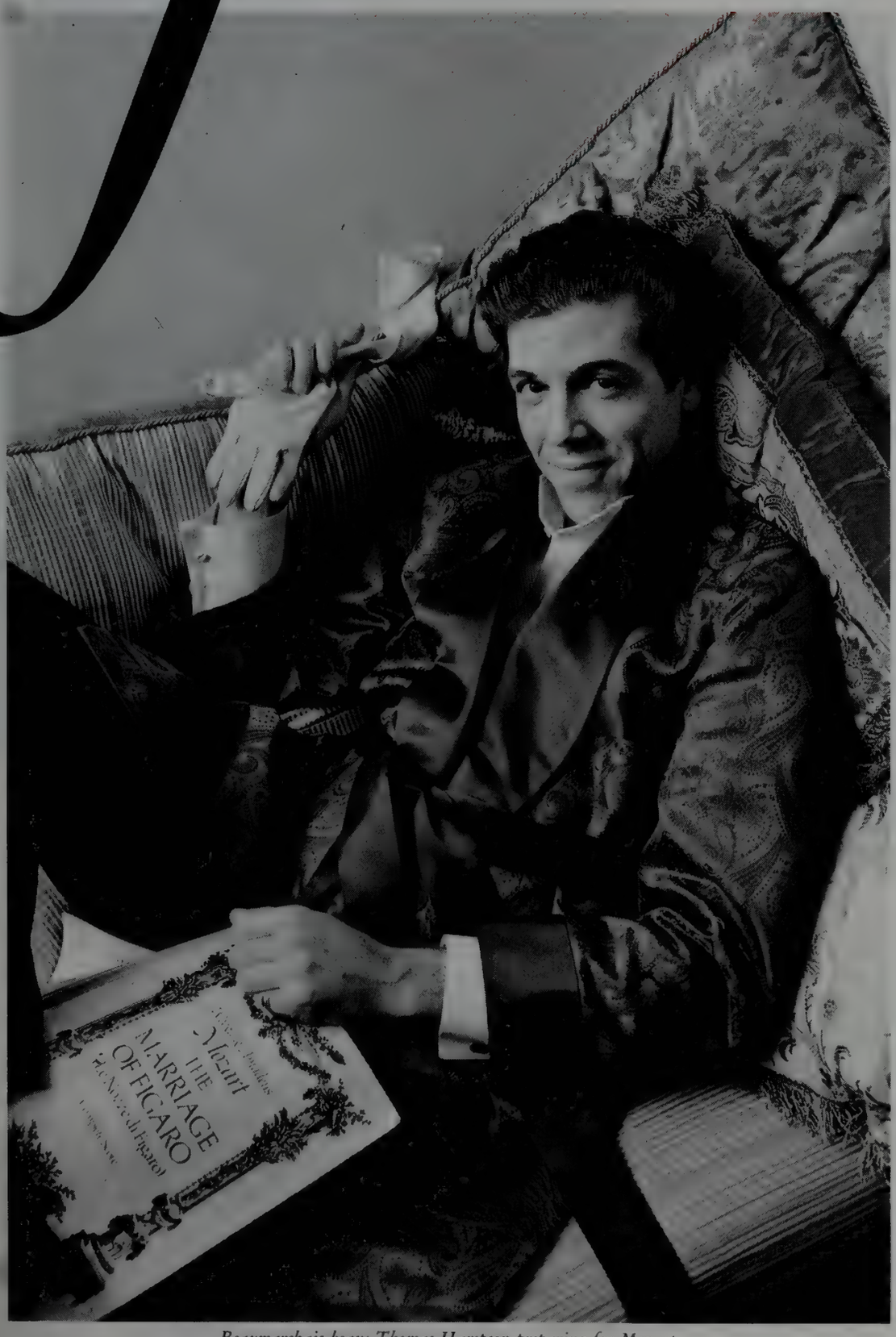


Beaumarchais beau: Thomas Hampson preparing for Mozart.

The Hampson Option

Six feet four, with a rangy-frontiersman bravado to match the power and sensuality of his treacle-rich baritone voice, thirty-six-year-old Thomas Hampson now starts a dazzling run at New York's Metropolitan Opera, appearing in the title roles of Britten's *Billy Budd* and Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* as well as Count Almaviva in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Quite some schedule, quite some accolade, but Hampson won't be fazed by the challenge. A graduate in political science who enjoys interpreting the finely honed subtleties of lieder as much as the broader emotional strokes of opera, he is that rare singer who thinks hard before he opens his mouth. "I carry a strong spiritual banner," he has claimed—and whether he's deep in the earnestness of a Bach cantata or floating through the light relief of a Cole Porter number, Thomas Hampson finds the right note in his mind and soul, not just his throat.

—RUPERT CHRISTIANSEN

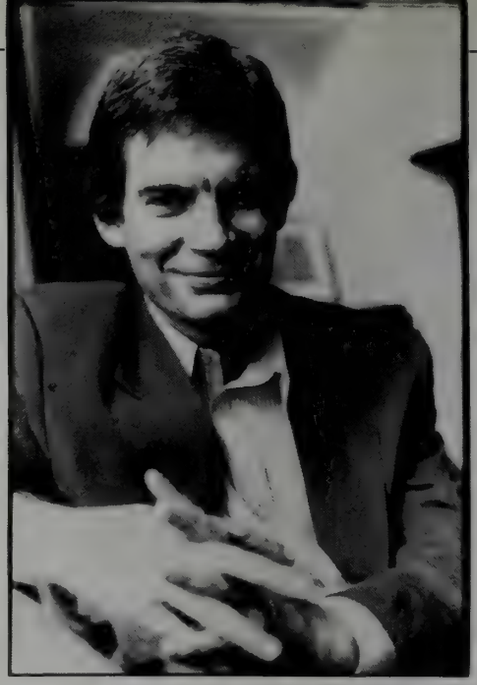
Photograph by GEORGE LANGE

Edna Buchanan, author of The Corpse Had a Familiar Face, *lives in Miami Beach, Florida.*

Hot Type

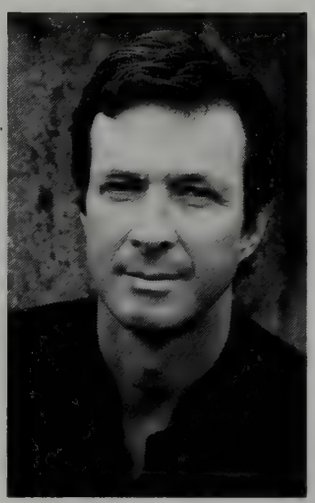
A *V.F.* pick of spring books

The "queen of crime," reporter Edna Buchanan, recounts her twenty years on the beat for *The Miami Herald* in *Never Let Them See You Cry* (Random House). A fantastical Latin-American hell forms the backdrop for *The War of Don Emmanuel's Nether Parts* (Morrow), a picaresque first novel by Louis de Bernières. Poet and author Natalie Robins's *Alien Ink* (Morrow) impressively details the F.B.I.'s nefarious surveillance of writers throughout the twentieth century. The story of a young woman struggling to raise her son in swing-era Harlem, eighty-four-year-old Ann Petry's *The Street* (Houghton Mifflin) is being reissued forty-five years after its powerful debut. While researching the life of a Victorian ancestor, an English academic manages to reconstruct his own shattered world in *Ever After* (Knopf), by Graham Swift. *A Man Jumps out of an Airplane* (Clarkson N. Potter) is a collection of minute dreamscape fictions by Barry Yourgrau. Nik Cohn takes a walk on the wild side up New York's Great White Way in *The Heart of the World* (Knopf). *Christopher and Alexandra* (Ticknor & Fields) is a steaming story of consuming, indulgent love by Maggie Gee, who was once named one of Britain's "20 Best Young Novelists" and is the author most recently of *Grace*. Journalist and essayist Roger Rosenblatt discusses the bitter politics of abortion and their impact on the American *Zeitgeist* in *Life Itself* (Random House). Japanese-American relations take a turn for the worse in Michael Crichton's new novel, *Rising Sun* (Knopf). *Good Gossip* (Random House) is a collection of Jacqueline Carey's humorously observed portraits of young New Yorkers on the rise. Art critic Robert Hughes first traveled to Barcelona twenty-five years ago as a youthful devotee of George Orwell and has been researching the dramatic history of the Catalan capital ever since for his new book, *Barcelona* (Knopf). And Richard Bausch's novel *Violence* (Houghton Mifflin/Seymour Lawrence) explores the repercussions of a random shooting on the life of a married couple.

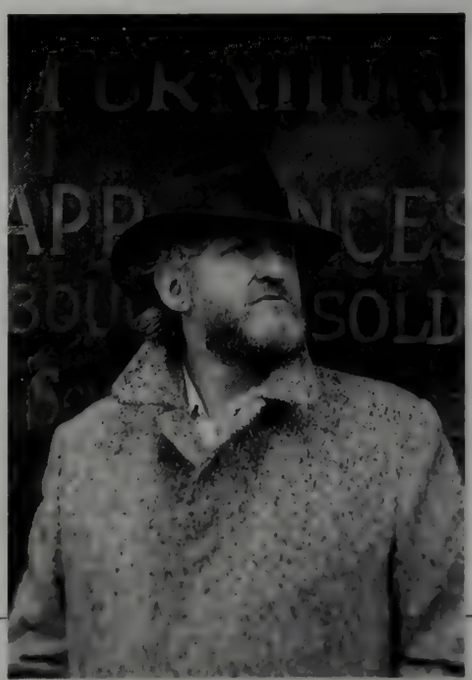


Graham Swift's novel Waterland *is being made into a film with Jeremy Irons.*

Ann Petry's haunting novel, The Street, *was the first book by an African-American woman to sell more than one million copies.*



Michael Crichton, right, *is the author most recently of the best-selling* Jurassic Park. *Performance artist Barry Yourgrau,* below, *is the author of* Wearing Dad's Hat.



Nik Cohn is the author of Rock Dreams *and the article that inspired the movie* Saturday Night Fever.

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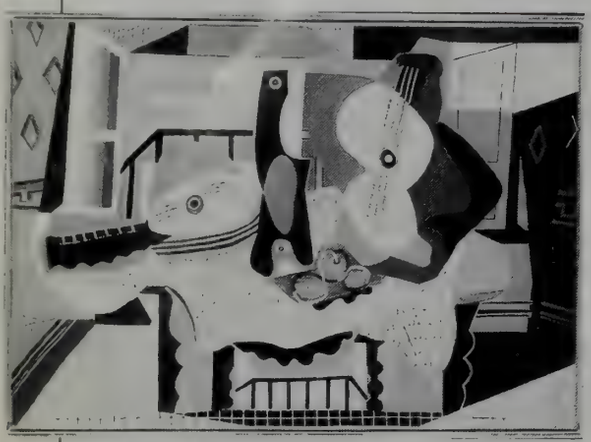

PAINTINGS COURTESY OF THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

Picasso's Mandolin and Guitar, *Juan-les-Pins,* above, *and,* right, Still Life with Steer's Skull, *Paris.*

Picasso keeps being rediscovered. The recently published first volume of John Richardson's biography is remaking our understanding of the young artist. Now "Picasso and Things," an exhibition at the Cleveland Museum of Art organized by Jean Sutherland Boggs and the Musée Picasso, is highlighting a rarely considered side of Picasso—the painter of still lifes. It is a first-rate idea for a show. Too often when we look at Picasso's still lifes we see only a creator of Cubism, not the devoted lover of objects. We forget, too, that Picasso was an intellectual as well as a visceral painter. This exhibition offers a fine foil to the usual view of Picasso as a priapic genius and force of nature, for it emphasizes the artist's thoughtful detachment. Picasso often stood back. There was no loss of intensity when he did so. Both Mandolin and Guitar *(1924) and* Still Life with Steer's Skull *(1942) have an animal strangeness. Like the rest of his art, they are anything but still.* —MARK STEVENS

JEFFREY THURNHER

'Miss Juliette

"How do you say 'naïveté'?" asks Juliette Lewis. No wonder the word is unfamiliar. Lewis began acting at twelve, left home at fourteen, and has been living by her own precocious wits ever since—so, naïve is one thing she's not. Now eighteen, she has landed in the cinematic spotlight with her sublime portrayal of a Lolita wannabe in *Cape Fear*. "I've tried to prepare myself for the fame aspect," she admits, "because I knew that if I kept doing what I do, that would come." And should keep coming: Lewis will soon star in *That Night,* followed by a featured role in Woody Allen's latest. In the meantime, she's back home in Hollywood with actor Brad Pitt, her Romeo. Says Juliette, "We're madly, madly in love."

—JIM RASENBERGER

Juliette Lewis: The actress comes into her own.

We were cruisin' Highway 34 when Lenny said, "Take the left fork."

"Why?" I asked. Lenny's answer, "Why not?" My husband the navigator. The kids spotted icicles on the shady side of the rocks. More advice from Lenny: "Take the trail between those two big boulders." I was dubious. But Lenny repeated, "Why not?" adding, "the Sidekick® is built to go just about anywhere." So off we went. Four wheelin' uphill. Plenty of power from its 16-valve engine. Lenny was in all his glory. "Go left." An old Doobie Brothers cassette played. A deer bounded by just to our right. I checked the mirror to see if the kids saw her, but they were asleep. "This Sidekick is almost too comfortable," I whispered. Lenny winked at me and said, "Pull over under that tree." I smiled and answered, "Why not?"

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Bands Across the Water

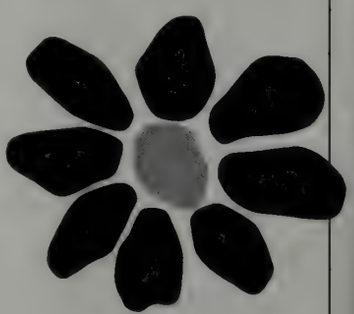
Four British groups making waves in the U.S.

America has always responded ecstatically to British musicians' sweet interpretations of its mind-boggling culture. Now four Brit groups are poised to invade U.S. shores, and they all have a crack at the charts at a time when Americans have been producing sensationally mundane pop records.

James is the grandfather of the bunch, a Manchester band formed in 1983, before there was a Manchester sound. After the U.S. success of their tune "Sit Down," their latest CD may finally bring them a bona fide American hit.

Toni Halliday and Dean Garcia, the founding members of Curve, have also been around for a while—eight years of junked bands and litigation before they decided to be friends, to be precise. Halliday's eerie techno poetry can't decide whether it's cute or evil, giving this group the edge on cool.

Marco Nelson and Femi Williams, who were responsible for the Rare Groove club scene in the late eighties, which revived the American soul scene for a new generation, found the real thing in Georgia-bred vocalist Carleen Anderson, whose parents performed with the James Brown Revue. Their band, which is aptly named the Young Disciples, deftly melds the worlds of dance, reggae, and rap into a blend that is acoustically simple yet deep.



James

Siobhan Fahey was already a pop star—as part of the trio Bananarama—when she teamed up with Marcella Detroit to form Shakespear's Sister, and a new image was born. These ladies have taken on the male privilege of aggressive, panting stage behavior with a vengeance, adding the significant drama of witchy vocals over electric-guitar riffs.

—KIKI MASON

Clockwise from top: *the Young Disciples, James's logo, Curve, and Shakespear's Sister.*

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Quayle Force

Marilyn Quayle and her sister Nancy Northcott at work in Washington, D.C.

Marilyn Quayle is an underused national asset. Ever since her husband became vice president, scarcely a month has passed without some revelation about how she has set his agenda, managed his career, and positioned him for glory. This full-time Svengali is also a trained lawyer and the mother of three children. Most women in her shoes would not be giving off a strong aura of repressed energy, but Mrs. Quayle constantly looks as if she were itching to run Chrysler, on alternate Tuesdays.

Since the Chrysler slot is taken, and since the powers that be were unenthusiastic about having the Second Lady in her husband's old Senate seat, Mrs. Quayle has worked off some of that excess steam by shuttling from hurricane to earthquake—and by co-writing with her sister Nancy Northcott a fast-paced thriller about the death of Castro. Like many books in this genre, *Embrace the Serpent* (Crown) has a feverish geopolitical premise. With their union and their economy in shreds, those pesky Russians are still playing expansionist games in Cuba, but now they're in the pay of a new global superthreat: the Arabs. Bob Grant, a conservative young senator, is virtually the only man in Washington smart enough to see the danger to his country's national security and reach out to the freedom fighters struggling to liberate the island. One turns the pages as much for the scathing portraits of stupid and decadent liberals—the press is duped by the Russians, the Democratic president snookered by the media—as to find out if the hero will succeed in his eleventh-hour bid to save the hemisphere.

—ELISE O'SHAUGHNESSY

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ERIC BOMAN AT THE HAY-ADAMS HOTEL, WASHINGTON, D.C.; HAIR BY STEPHEN KNOLL; MAKEUP BY MARGARET AVERY. BOTH FOR THE STEPHEN KNOLL SALON

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Hello, Emmylou

In a world of rhinestones and sequins, Emmylou Harris is a string of pearls. A decidedly unhillbilly Country Queen, she was raised near Washington, D.C., and didn't start listening seriously to her adopted music until her twenties, but she has gone on to represent Nashville (where she now lives) at its purest. Her lonely stand against the urban-cowboy treacle of the early eighties—"Hopefully, we're past that; it was a real black period"—helped pave the way for the neo-traditionalist boom that has dominated C-and-W radio for the last few years. Harris's own airplay isn't quite what it used to be, but don't think she's ready to retire her sweet soprano just yet. In January, with a mantel of Grammys and a stack of gold records already to her name, she was inducted into the Grand Ole Opry. And she has just released *Emmylou at the Ryman,* an all-acoustic jewel recorded live in the Opry's former home with her new band, the Nash Ramblers. "As long as I still get the joy," says Harris, forty-four, "I want to keep doing it." —J.R.

Sweet dreams: A laid-back Emmylou Harris in Nashville.

Night-table Reading

TIM SHEAFFER

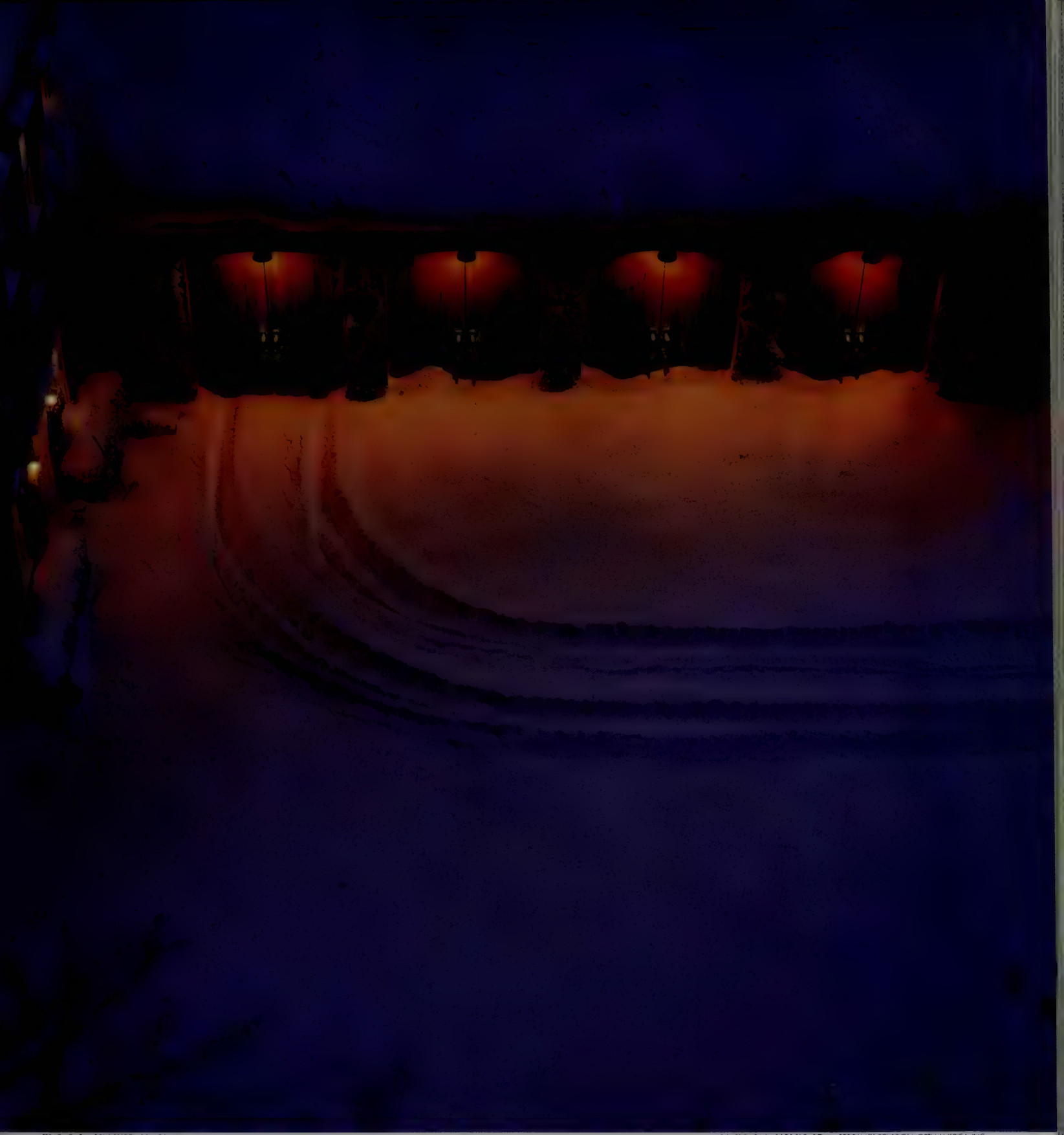
Maureen McGovern *(singer):* Possession, *by A. S. Byatt (Random House). "In the nineteenth century, people really fell in love, were willing to face consequences and overcome obstacles. People mistrust passion today."*

Gary Oldman *(actor): "The Vampire Chronicles," by Anne Rice (Knopf). "When you finish these three books, you actually believe that there are vampires in the world."*

Sharon Pratt Kelly *(mayor of Washington, D.C.):* Sullivan's Sting, *by Lawrence Sanders (Berkley). "This intense whodunit allowed me to vicariously enjoy being a private eye while relaxing on my honeymoon."*

Jerry Della Femina *(advertising executive):* The Prince, *by Machiavelli (Mentor). "To prepare for 1992. When the going gets tough, the tough read Machiavelli!"*

PHOTOGRAPH FAR LEFT BY RICHARD CORMAN; STYLED BY EVYAN METZNER



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The Lost Boy

Can Don King and the entourage of handlers surrounding Mike Tyson save the boxer from himself? Or does he need to be saved from them? Tyson's choice of mentors since the death of his surrogate father, Cus D'Amato, has seen him through a disastrous marriage, the humiliating loss of his title, and an indictment for rape. Where will it end? PETER J. BOYER reports on the journey of the man who could have been a contender

ON THE ROPES
Tyson's glory as heavyweight champ has given way to a tangle of personal crises.

The people around Mike Tyson have devised this system, simple if not elegant, designed to ensure the former heavyweight champ the pleasure of female companionship without the awkward complications that dating has presented him in the past. It works this way: Tyson chooses a woman, and then two or three members of his entourage screen her to determine what she wants, to make sure she knows what Mike wants, and, of course, to provide witnesses should the need arise.

And with Tyson, the need does arise. Only twenty-five, he has been accused of improprieties with girls and women almost since reaching puberty—incidents in shopping malls, parking lots, nightclubs, and, of course, that noisy war with former wife Robin Givens, which played out before a national audience. A misbegotten journey to Indianapolis last July brought another batch of allegations and lawsuits (and the memorable characterization of him as a "serial buttocks fondler"), and the most dire circumstance of Tyson's troubled young life: the rape charges he now faces in Marion County, Indiana, criminal court.

Tyson and his supporters maintain that the events in question amounted to a romantic liaison willingly entered into by both partners. But an eighteen-year-old beauty-pageant contestant and the Marion County grand jury accuse Tyson of attacking her in his hotel room, restraining her on his bed, raping her with his fingers, forcing her to submit to oral sex, and forcing intercourse. A guilty verdict will end a rare sports career that once promised true greatness, and wreck the biggest payday in sports history (a $100 million title fight against Evander Holyfield). It will also produce the ruined life that Tyson's detractors have long predicted for him.

"The bottom line is that you really realize every night of Mike's life something like that could happen to Mike," says John Horne, who now spends most of his time, day and night, in Tyson's company. Horne, thirty-one, a tall, thin man with a certain street sensibility, once aspired to an acting career, but is now essentially Tyson's paid friend, one of those within a close circle whose job now includes screening Tyson's romantic partners. The others are Anthony Pitts, an enormous man whose countenance lends credence to the legend on his leather baseball cap, KICK ASS; Dale Edwards, a girthy fellow partial to dark glasses; and Rory Holloway, a lifelong Tyson pal from Albany, New York (although Holloway's credentials as a "keeper" are suspect: he told José Torres, a bygone member of Tyson's circle and a former New York State athletic commissioner, that he and Tyson once shared twenty-four women in a single evening).

Of these, only Edwards was with Tyson on that two-day romp in Indianapolis, and Horne insists the whole thing could have been avoided if only the system had been in place.

"As careful as he is, he will do a little bit more just to keep himself outta certain situations like that," Horne says. "What we can do is screen women better. See, if I was there, or if more of our crew was there, that woman would have to answer some type of questions in a very subliminal way. Not no derogatory way, not no direct way, or nothing like that. But when she has to talk directly to people right around Mike, more than just Mike himself, then she knows that more of Mike's personal people know exactly what she's up to. Like the other night when Mike was out, three or four of our own guys was right with him. Therefore, anybody who's right around him, they can see how [the woman is] talking to him, if she's talking to him herself, or whatever, and if her and Mike were to get into something or whatever, you know, he has three or four wit-

INSET PHOTOGRAPH BY LORI GRINKER

RING CYCLE
Don King, *above, left,* looks on as Tyson winks to the crowd during the weigh-in before beating Donovan "Razor" Ruddock in Las Vegas last June. Robin Givens, *near right,* her mother, and Tyson at the couple's wedding reception in 1988.

King says Tyson's female adversaries "are just taking advantage of him. He's the victim."

nesses directly right there who know exactly what's going on."

That Mike Tyson is reduced to having his assignations monitored is a jarring indication of a life veering out of control, the more jarring because Tyson's success was true epic drama. From the streets of Brooklyn, where he was the incarnation of mainstream America's nightmare—a remorseless hood—he became the incarnation of American success: he was taken in by a kindly old couple, who fed him, sheltered him, and taught him a trade; in his case, the kindly guardian was the genius fight trainer Cus D'Amato, and the trade he taught Tyson made him wildly rich and, in 1987, the youngest-ever undisputed heavyweight champion of the world.

There was something about this kid, a natural allure that reached out from beyond his considerable boxing skills and compelled the public. He was never particularly articulate, with his high, soft voice, and certainly not pretty, like Ali, but he held this weird magnetism; people wanted to see him, to hear about him, to listen to him. He was so young, but so in command; people who'd never heard of heavyweight champs Larry Holmes or George Foreman, men and women alike, suddenly *had* to see every Tyson fight, even if it did cost $34.95 on pay-per-view.

The late Jimmy Jacobs, one of Tyson's co-managers during his rise, once said, "You can't look away from a Tyson fight because you know that at any moment something terrible is going to happen." Unfortunately, the same has been true of his life outside the ring, and as the seamy incidents and newspaper headlines and lawsuits began to accumulate, Tyson's life assumed the qualities of a gathering tragedy.

For a time the problems were obscured by his appeal, covered up by his handlers, excused because of his background, and reined in by Tyson's own determination to succeed. When he was just a teenager with budding promise as a boxer, his first trainer, a D'Amato protégé named Teddy Atlas, used to worry that the flaws in Mike's nature would be patched over rather than dealt with, that his bursts of unacceptable behavior would be overlooked rather than punished, and that Tyson would suffer for it in the end. Atlas reportedly left the fighter's camp after a confrontation with him over instances of lewd behavior with local girls.

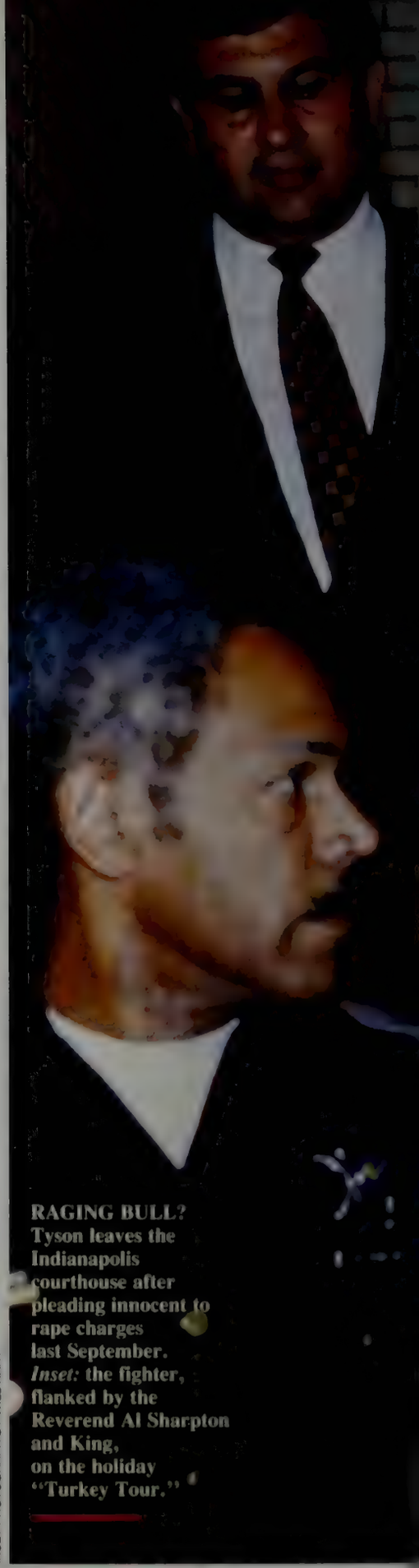
"Cus's great saying, which I think fits Mike, was 'People born round do not die square,' " Atlas says. "And that's it. So give me all the bullshit you want—people say his mother passed away at a young age, and all that. But I just think you should be accountable for your actions. . . . I'm just saying that somewhere along the line you continue going that way because that is what you want to do more than you want to do something else. It has to do with your basic character."

Tyson's character has been pulled and massaged into many shapes by people who have needed their young money machine to fit their scripts, the most recent being the promoter Don King, who casts Tyson as a populist martyr. But Tyson's own vision of his true nature is something sadly less noble. "I swear," he told a reporter last fall, as the clouds converged, "I can't imagine any kids ever looking up to me and saying, 'I want to be Mike Tyson.' " And resonating from Indianapolis now is the hollow sound of the ending Tyson once predicted for himself, had he not been saved by boxing:

"In jail—or dead. One of those."

It is hard to imagine, but just five years ago, before he was humiliated by Robin Givens, before he was surrounded by Don King and criminal lawyers, before he had a screening system enveloping him, Mike Tyson was carefree and happily exploring the new worlds that were suddenly opening up to him. He had been adopted by New York's black jet set, the design and fashion crowd, and shown a life he'd never imagined, coming up in the streets of Brooklyn, just a few miles away.

Beverly Johnson, who'd been a star model, met Tyson one night at Columbus, the late-night restaurant on the Upper West Side, where she was eating with a group of friends. "He was on the horizon and I knew about him because I knew about boxing, and I thought he was a sweet guy," Johnson recalls. "Basically, what happened was we all became friends. He wanted to be introduced to that jet-set life in New York that I was very much part of then, and everybody just fell in love with him—you know, *(Continued on page 241)*



RAGING BULL? Tyson leaves the Indianapolis courthouse after pleading innocent to rape charges last September. *Inset:* the fighter, flanked by the Reverend Al Sharpton and King, on the holiday "Turkey Tour."

INSET PHOTOGRAPH BY WILL HART

A guilty verdict true greatness,

will end a career promising
and wreck the biggest payday in sports history.

BEAUTY
AND THE BEAST
[illegible]
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SOLID GOLDIE

She made it playing the giddy blonde, but Goldie Hawn has been onto the business of Hollywood from the start, which may explain how she got her $30 million deal with Disney. And the forty-six-year-old actress is still one of Showtown's busiest leading ladies, with three new movies this year.

LYNN HIRSCHBERG reports

Photographs by ANNIE LEIBOVITZ • Styled by MARINA SCHIANO

"Where's Goldie?"

She is here—somewhere in this Y.M.C.A. rec room—but no one, at first anyway, recognizes her. And then, wait a minute, over to the side, there she is: an enlarged, engorged version of herself. Goldie is *immense*—at least twice her normal size—and she is surrounded by various technicians, one of whom is sticking a tube down the back of her drawstring cotton pants.

"Amazing, isn't it?" says Hawn softly, as if the phony flab were pressing on her vocal cords. She has donned this rather extreme padding for her latest movie, *Death Becomes Her,* a wild dark comedy about two women (Hawn and her real-life pal Meryl Streep), their rivalry over one man (Bruce Willis), and their search for eternal youth. In the film, Hawn has to metamorphose several times—the most drastic change involves a gain of a hundred-odd pounds.

"I am *huge,*" she says. "Look at me." She waddles away from the tech guy, who has been plumping her various bulges. Hawn is wearing hospital garb, a pageboy-length blond wig, and a great deal of very realistic pseudo-bulk. Beneath all the faux flesh, you can sort of make out Hawn's face—her large, round blue eyes give her away.

"It's astonishing," says her publicist. "Really incredible," says Hawn's sister, who is also the unit publicist. "A real argument for weight loss," says Bob Zemeckis, the director.

Zemeckis calls Goldie away for a conference—in the scene they are about to shoot, Hawn's character has been confined to a mental institution after her best friend (Streep) has stolen her fiancé (Willis). Financial ruin and fat—not to mention a potentially violent obsession with her former friend—have landed Hawn's character in the loony bin.

These scenes in the institution were not in the original script—Hawn fought to get them written into the movie. "She was tenacious," says a source close to the production. "And she was right. Goldie gets it big-time—she knows what will work."

Which is probably why she's been working nonstop for the last two years. Her last movie, *Deceived,* a thriller, came out last fall, and *Crisscross,* a mother-son drama set in the late sixties, is about to be released. In the last year, she has also filmed two new comedies: *Housesitter,* opposite Steve Martin, and now *Death Becomes Her.* "It's very hard to be a woman in your mid-forties in Hollywood," says Nancy Meyers, who co-wrote *Private Benjamin,* Hawn's biggest hit. "It's always hard for women, but it's especially hard now. And Goldie is working. All the time."

So, at age forty-six, Hawn is beating the odds, albeit, at the moment, in pounds and pounds of excess. "That was great!" Zemeckis says after the fourth and final take. "Just great." Two assistants pull Hawn up from her chair, and she waddles slowly toward her assistant Michael, who is also her nephew. "Do you wanna hear about the kids?" he asks and proceeds to list their schedules. Hawn listens for a second, then turns slowly toward one of the technicians, who, once again, is about to stick that tube down her pants. "I have to go to the bathroom," Hawn tells him. "And when you gotta go, you gotta go."

Quickly, the two tech guys, a father-son team, strip off her clothes. Naked,

she is still huge—an anatomically perfect 250-pound, five-foot-six-inch woman. Her enormous stomach hangs, her fake breasts sag, her cushioned hips sway. They unzip the fat suit down the center of her chest and Hawn steps out. Dressed in a black leotard and tights, she shakes a bit and touches her toes. A costumer hands her a kimono, which she ties tightly around her waist. Hawn looks tiny, lithe, and graceful. "Oh, that feels great," she says, giggling as she touches her toes again. "I feel free."

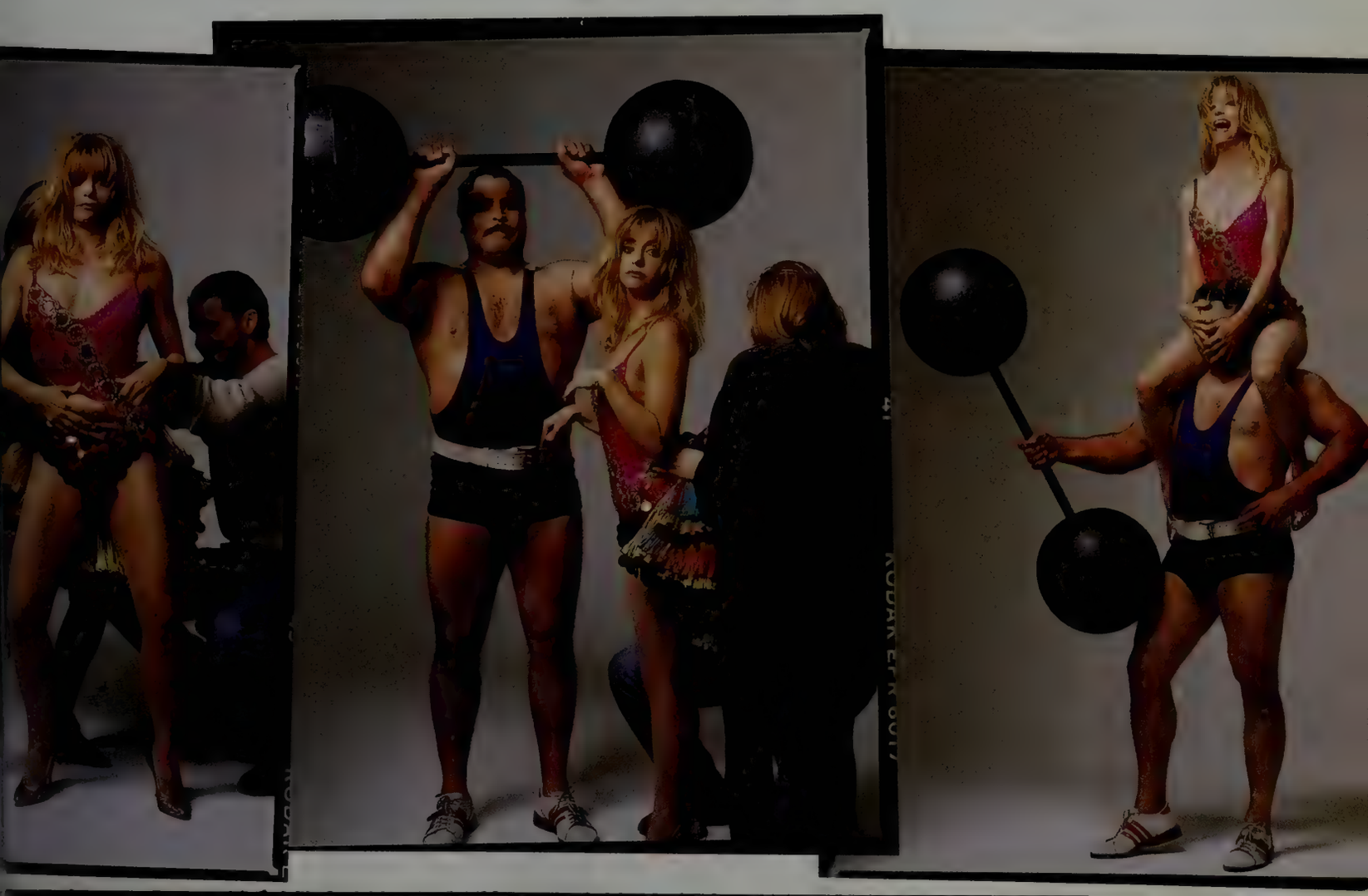
Two days later, at around eleven A.M. on a Friday in late December, Hawn is at the home in Pacific Palisades she shares with Kurt Russell, three kids (Oliver and Kate, from her second marriage, and Wyatt, her son with Russell), her mother, and a number of animals named after characters she has played. There is a constant bustle—a housekeeper serving coffee, a gardener inquiring about hedges, an assistant asking about a missing Christmas gift. "I get questions all day long," Hawn says, settling into a couch in her vast living room; she has exquisite posture and sits ramrod-straight against a mountain of pillows. Hawn adjusts a needlepoint pillow that reads, "The Smile You Send Out Returns to You," and another that spells "Panties."

"Everyone has a question," she says. "But if you know what you want, it's not hard at all. Like this house. We moved here in late August and I did it all in four months." The rooms are vast—really hotel proportions—and the furniture is equally grand. Couches are as deep as twin beds, chairs could hold four adults, and ottomans resemble low coffee tables. Nearly everything is chintz—the living room is in shades of celadon and dusty pink, and there are coordinating pillows and throws and trims and tassels everywhere. The coffee is served in Christmas-tree-patterned china and the cookies arrive on a Christmas-tree plate. "Nice Jewish girl that I am," Hawn says rather ruefully as she pours herself a cup.

Each room has a definite color scheme or, even, overriding theme. The study (*one* of the studies, that is) is dubbed "the Indian Room," and decorated in dark browns and greens. The overall effect is simultaneously festive, overwhelming, and inviting.

"There's no bullshit about her," says Meryl Streep. "She's a meat-and-potatoes girl."

GOLDIE TOUCH
Hawn flexes with Olympic weight lifter Mario Martinez.



"It's like set decorating," Hawn says. "I thought, Well, maybe if I can't act, I can do this for a living." Hawn, who is wearing a tight white V-necked T-shirt, a pair of loose-fitting jeans, and white moccasins, studies the room a moment. "I like starting from scratch," she says. "And when it's done, I stop thinking about it."

Mike, her nephew/assistant, walks in with eight or so Warner Bros. shopping bags. "*There you are,*" Goldie sings in an operatic version of the Miss America anthem. "Mikeeeeyboy . . . Oh!" she exclaims, "little Warner Bros. *things*." He takes the bags and places them underneath a massive, densely ornamented Christmas tree. "Is there a Chevy Chase gift that needs to go out?" Mike asks. "Yes," says Goldie. "It's on the landing as you go near the Santa's Village area on the second floor."

The kids are home from school, and the boys, along with four of Oliver's friends, are playing ball in the backyard. "When we work we're on vacation," says Russell, who stays home with the kids when Hawn goes on location. "It's busier when we're home. When we work, it's an excuse to be focused on one thing. When we're home, there are no excuses."

"It's very hard to balance everything," Hawn says. The family splits its time between L.A. and a seventy-acre ranch outside Aspen, and she and Russell are very much in the social swim in both towns. It was Hawn who was chosen as President Bush's dinner partner at a Malibu gala given last year by producer Jerry Weintraub, a top Bush fund-raiser. "Their evening together was nonstop talking," recalls Patti Hawn, Goldie's sister. "She got Bush to giggle. He and Goldie were so engrossed in conversation that Sally Field, who was seated across from them, whispered to Goldie, 'What are you talking about?' Goldie tossed up her hands and knocked a glass of red wine over onto Sly Stallone's tuxedo. Sly jumped up and Bush laughed even more—the president said, 'Well, Goldie, I would ask you to pass the salt, but I'm not sure what would happen.' "

"It's fun, but you have to prioritize," Hawn is saying. "Look, Kurt and I went out to a party last night. We got home, it was late, but I had promised the kids that I was going to cook breakfast in the morning, that I was going to take them to school. And that's what I did. And I'm tired today. I wish I could have stayed in bed. But I said, This is my pleasure. And this will be my pleasure in memory." She pauses and a great seriousness comes over her. "The word 'sacrifice' seems to be this word nobody wants to say anymore," she says. "But it does come into play."

When Kurt Russell met Goldie Hawn for the first time, he was sixteen and she was twenty-one. It was twenty-five years ago, on the set of a Disney extravaganza entitled *The One and Only, Genuine, Original Family Band.* Russell was a star, Hawn just a dancer. "I remember thinking she was well built," Russell says on the phone from the set of his most recent film, *Unlawful Entry*. "But I didn't have a car or anything. She was beyond the realm of possibility."

The next time they met was in 1984, when Hawn cast Russell opposite her in *Swing Shift*, a movie her production company had set up. "I was anxious to meet her," Russell recalls. "And I sort of knew right away that I liked her a lot."

Swing Shift was a major disappointment at the box office, and a bit of a mess, what with the director, Jonathan Demme, disassociating himself from the film, and the screenwriter taking her name off the finished product. Despite the film's poor showing, one thing was clear: Hawn and Russell had chemistry.

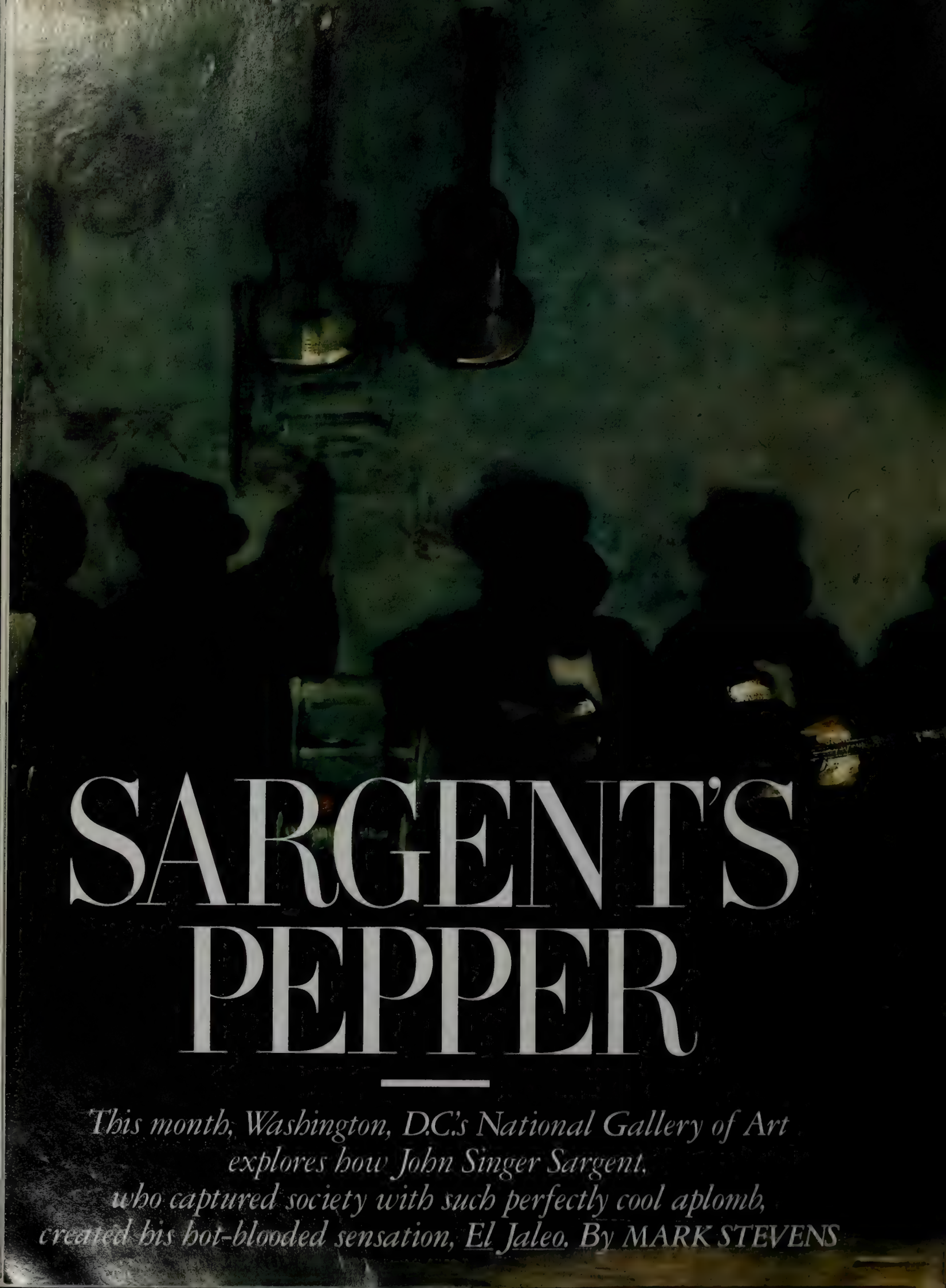
Russell quite enjoys the memory of their first night together: "Goldie was renovating her house and living with the kids at her beach house. I was staying at my brother-in-law's, and that first night we had nowhere to go. So we ended up breaking into the house that Goldie was rebuilding. There was no furniture and we walked around and discussed where it should go. Looking back, it was fairly prophetic.

"When we got to the master bedroom, I said, 'This is where the bed goes.' I remember looking at Goldie and thinking, Do I really want to do this or not? But then I thought, Let's have some fun. So we're on the floor of this house, in the master bedroom, and the next thing we know, flashlights are in our eyes. It was the local security company checking to see if there had been a break-in. We were lying there naked. We said, 'It's O.K.,' and then just sat there laughing."

Later that evening, they checked into a motel room. "I didn't want to leave her," Russell says. "As we were getting into bed together, I realized it was the most fun I'd ever had. I thought, This girl is a *(Continued on page 220)*

HAWN TARGET
Goldie on the mark, and, *opposite*, on the point.

"She's very physical, and people respond to that," says Kurt.



SARGENT'S PEPPER

This month, Washington, D.C.'s National Gallery of Art explores how John Singer Sargent, who captured society with such perfectly cool aplomb, created his hot-blooded sensation, El Jaleo. By MARK STEVENS

Sargent's *El Jaleo* (1882), a hit of the Paris Salon, is considered the *Carmen* of paintings.

Sargent was the last artist able to endow the stylish rich with something akin to grace.

In 1882, the twenty-six-year-old American expatriate John Singer Sargent set out to become the talk of Paris. He had a genius for pleasing, so he did not challenge or provoke the governing taste. He aroused it. Knowing that the idea of an exotic Spain thrilled nineteenth-century Parisians, he worked up one of the greatest of all south-of-the-border pictures—*El Jaleo,* a sultry, life-size portrayal of a Spanish flamenco dancer in mid-strut. Nothing about the picture is restrained. Could there be in all of art, for example, a more prominent *nostril?* The dancer is so hot-blooded she seems about to snort steam.

As Sargent had hoped, *El Jaleo* became the conversation piece of the Paris Salon—and the curtain raiser for his brilliant career as a chronicler of the rich and stylish. The legendary Boston collector Isabella Stewart Gardner, who eventually owned forty-four of his pictures, ended up with *El Jaleo;* it has not moved from her museum since 1914. Newly cleaned and on loan for four months to the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., *El Jaleo* is now the centerpiece for a seductive little exhibition about the making of a single, celebrated painting.

By gathering together a number of related works and preliminary studies for the painting, the show's organizers have demon-

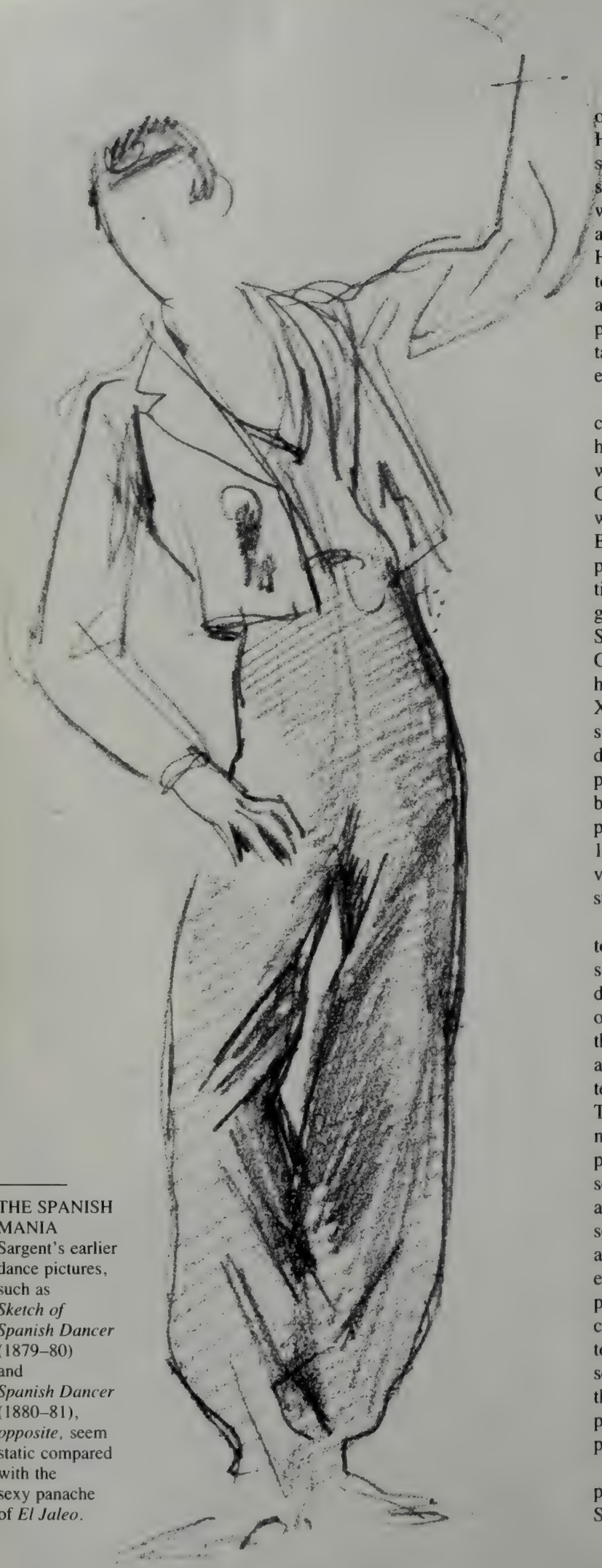
strated how hard Sargent labored to make his splash. They have also made a point of the French vogue for Spain. Many important artists of the time—pre-eminently Manet—took a nearly obsessive interest in Velázquez and Goya. There was, besides, the romantic conviction among pasty Parisians and northerners generally that the sex must be better (more passionate, earthy, theatrical) down there. For many people, *El Jaleo* is the *Carmen* of paintings.

But the exhibition also has a trickier sort of interest, having to do with the vexing question of just what to make of Sargent's great gifts. To this day he remains both the most underrated and the most overrated of artists. Some delight in his facility and bravura handling of a loaded brush; others consider him a shallow virtuoso, a pussycat of the rich—a brilliant society portraitist, perhaps, but isn't that just fluff and feathers in the era of Cézanne? In fact, Sargent has a fascination beyond yea or nay. His superficiality is mysterious. It even conveys an important sadness.

He had a bizarre upbringing. His father, a Philadelphia doctor, took his wife to Europe for her health. The couple kept meaning to return, but didn't get around to it for decades. Sargent was born in Florence in 1856, and didn't see his homeland until he was almost twenty. His parents were nomads, constantly moving to stay warm in the winter and cool in the summer. They were not wealthy, not particularly social, and they lived in constant fear of ill health. Sargent had few friends and almost no official schooling.

The traveling gave him an easy command of French, English, Italian, and German. The expatriate American community, in turn, was rich in both eccentrics and affectations. Not surprisingly, Sargent became a cosmopolitan, at home everywhere and nowhere. He devel-

THE COSMOPOLITAN Sargent in his mid-twenties, at about the time he painted *El Jaleo*. *Opposite, Sketch of a Dancer Bowing*, from the same period.



THE SPANISH MANIA
Sargent's earlier dance pictures, such as *Sketch of Spanish Dancer* (1879–80) and *Spanish Dancer* (1880–81), *opposite*, seem static compared with the sexy panache of *El Jaleo*.

oped a kind of mirrored surface. He was unfailingly modest and shy, but people were rarely sure what he thought; some wondered whether there was anything beneath the surface. He seldom said much of great interest, often finding himself unable to locate the right word, and punctuating his sentences when talking to strangers with an "er-er-er-er..."

What he had was a magnificent fluency with the brush. In his early twenties, he studied with the flashy society painter Carolus-Duran, and not only was accepted by the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris but also placed second in the matriculation examination there. After his great success with *El Jaleo* at the Salon, he had a small setback. Critics gasped in happy horror at his racy portrait of "Madame X," a notorious and busty Parisian social climber with a drop-dead profile. The outcry was probably good for business. It bothered him, though, and prepared the way for his move in 1884 to London, where he developed his classic portrait style.

Sargent was the last artist able to endow the stylish rich with something akin to grace. His dancing brushwork conveyed not only the rustling of silk but also the spirit of offhand ease dear to aristocratic taste. He did not tease the secrets out of faces. That would have been prying. In matters of flattery he had near-perfect pitch. He would enhance someone's appearance, for example, but never too much—not so that the sitter would have to acknowledge that he or she needed the help. He was exceedingly polite, and encouraged visitors to come to the studio so that his sitters would not get bored. He soon became so popular among the upper crust that the English painter Walter Sickert complained of "Sargentolatry."

That other great American expatriate, Henry James, adored Sargent. The writer constantly praised the painter both in conversation and in print. The rich social surface of Sargent's work, the artist's fluency, Anglophilia, and appreciation of manners—all these were catnip to a man like James. Yet it was James who, I think, first sensed the mysterious weakness. "Yes," he wrote a friend, "I have always thought Sargent a great painter. He would be greater still if he had one or two little things he hasn't—but he will do."

What were those little things? James himself was obsessed with the inability of aesthetes to experience the world in its fullness. He must have sensed that Sargent's failure to grasp the world robbed his art of grit and complication. Sargent, who died in 1925, never married, apparently never fell in love. (His closest friend was his sister.) Nor did he seem to conceal any private passions. "No one who knew him well or slightly has ever been tempted to suggest anything whatever about his private life," wrote Stanley Olson, a recent biographer of the artist. And yet one *knows* from the art that Sargent had the potential for passion.

In one way, *El Jaleo* is a picture about eruptions. The darks are thunderous. The light flashes. A tornado-like shadow rises from the dancer's head. Her skirts, thanks to the artist's quick brush, tremble in the light. Her pointed fingers make a marvelous, exclamatory rhyme with her high heels. In back a man groans, overcome by the dance. A girl in red spontaneously flings up her arms.

In another way, *El Jaleo* is terribly still. Sargent always keeps us safely apart. The painting reduces us to tourists twice removed, an audience watching another audience watching a dancer. Of course, aesthetes often get their life from the theater. That is their lovely form of melancholy. Here as elsewhere in Sargent's art, his failure makes his success poignant. ▯

Sargent's
superficiality is
mysterious.
It even
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sadness.

THE SINKING OF

Did the same furies that drove Holocaust refugee Robert Maxwell to build a high-stakes media empire play a role in his demise? EDWARD KLEIN reports in exclusive interviews with Maxwell's widow and daughter—and with his business associates in London and New York—on the final mystery of the press baron who died a death as paradoxical as the life he led

DAILY Mirror

Friday, December 6, 1991 NEWSPAPER FOR THE NINETIES 25p

THE LIE

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What Maxwell told Mirror's money man about missing millions

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AXWEL

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CAPTAIN BOB

FATHER KNOWS BEST? Maxwell in happier times, with Betty, Ghislaine, and Ian at the Cannes Film Festival in 1987, and the headline blowout following his death.

THE Sun

Wednesday, November 6, 1991 25p Audited daily sale for September 3,762,151 Today's TV: Pages 28 and 29

Maxw myst

DID HE FALL

Cap'n Bob . . Robert Maxwell on the deck of his £12million yacht. He had been cruising off the Canaries

DID HE JUMP?

Tycoon found

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"All the News That's Fit to Print"

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VOL. CXLI . . . No. 48,776

Robert Maxwell Is Found Dead In Atlantic Off Canary Islands

PRE

No E in

"I am utterly confused," said Elisabeth Meynard Maxwell, the elegant French-born widow of Robert Maxwell. "The worst part for me—the most difficult part—is that when I read this deluge about my husband I think I'm reading about a man I never knew. I am trying to adjust to a pattern of behavior that is not at all convergent with the man I knew, and that doesn't ring true for all the things Bob represented in my life. I am trying to decipher from this torrent of words the things that may be true from those I know are total lies."

She was sitting on the edge of a chintz-covered love seat, sipping tea and staring at me over the rim of her cup with her cool teal-blue eyes. We were talking about how the whole of British society seemed to be gloating over the fall of the house of Maxwell. Some newspapers reported that Betty Maxwell had closed her Oxford mansion—with its soaring stained-glass window depicting Maxwell as Samson at the gates of Gaza—and absconded to her thatch-roofed château near Bergerac, in southwest France. But in fact the iron-willed matriarch of the Maxwell family was still living in her adopted land, shuttling from lawyer to lawyer in an effort to unravel the tangled skein of her husband's financial affairs and to salvage whatever she could of her own inheritance.

She met frequently with her embattled sons, Ian and Kevin, both of whom were widely suspected of having aided their father in his illegal depredations. She delivered pep talks to the family—her seven surviving children and their spouses—reassuring them all that, despite the scandalous collapse of the Maxwell empire, life with Father had not been a total sham. She spoke daily to her youngest daughter, Ghislaine, who lives in New York and who was already discreetly inquiring of friends whether they would be willing to help provide surety for bail in the event her brothers were arrested. "Ghislaine is the baby of the family and the one who was closest to her father," her mother told me. "The whole of Ghislaine's world has collapsed, and it will be very difficult for her to continue."

Our interview was arranged by a mutual acquaintance, Samuel Pisar, a well-known international lawyer and a survivor of Auschwitz, who in 1988 had been invited along with Elie Wiesel and Simone Veil to address a conference on the Holocaust organized by Betty at Oxford. Through Betty, Pisar had become Maxwell's Paris-based *avocat*. Since Maxwell's sons were not Jewish, it was Pisar who had been asked by the Israelis and Betty to say *Kaddish* at Maxwell's extraordinary quasi–state funeral in Jerusalem, where, five days after his death at sea last November, the tycoon was buried according to the Orthodox custom of Israel, wrapped in a simple white shroud and without a coffin.

It had been agreed that our meeting should be kept secret, so I had rented a sitting room in the Dorchester hotel, across from Hyde Park in central London, without revealing to the manager the identity of my guest. She arrived dressed in couture widow's weeds, a trim, stylish woman who hardly showed her seventy years.

"You are looking quite well," I said after she had freshened her makeup in the powder room. We had met once before, at a testimonial dinner for her deceased husband in New York.

"Actually," she responded with a Gallic shrug, "I feel quite tired. I am normally an extremely good sleeper, but recently I've had to live by night and sleep by day to avoid the reptiles."

There was no mistaking her reference to the slithering frenzy of the British press, especially its venomous tabloids, one of which—the *Daily Mirror*—had been owned by her husband. Reporters were having a field day with the revelations that Maxwell, an avowed socialist, had plundered the *Mirror*'s pension fund, pillaged the treasuries of two of his public companies, shifted vast sums in and out of secret family trusts in Liechtenstein, illegally propped up the share price of Maxwell Communications Corporation, racked up debts of more than $5 billion, and—perhaps most unforgivable of all—ensnared Ian and Kevin in his malfeasance and left them exposed to criminal prosecution.

"They say I have £500,000," said Betty Maxwell. "Those are lies. I haven't anything."

A little more than a month had passed since Maxwell tumbled off his yacht and died under mysterious circumstances, and Betty Maxwell was numb from the savage public battering. People were calling her husband "rogue," "crook," "bully," "thief," "megalomaniac," "gangster." They told lurid tales of his sex orgies with midget Filipino hookers. Former employees, who had supped at his table, described how the 310-pound media mogul gorged on soupspoonful after soupspoonful of caviar. They painted a portrait of an erratic and cruel tyrant, one who used Turkish towels for toilet paper. Members of the British establishment—shamed and chagrined that they had lent him respectability along with money—behaved as though they had hardly known the man. Journalists wrote that he was a spy for the K.G.B. or Mossad or Czech intelligence—or all three. Others charged that Maxwell's emergence late in life as a born-again Jew was nothing but a charade to further his business interests in Israel and New York City.

This had gone on for weeks, and depending on which day's newspapers Betty Maxwell picked up, or whom her sons talked to, there was yet another theory about how her husband had met his end. One claimed that Maxwell had

GRIEF UNDER SIEGE: Elisabeth Maxwell pursued by the press in Las Palmas, where she had come to identify her husband's body with her daughter Ghislaine and her eldest surviving son, Philip, who was not close to his father.

died of a heart attack while having sex with a mistress on the six-foot-wide bed in the main cabin of his yacht as it sailed off the Canary Islands (this, naturally, was dubbed the Nelson Rockefeller theory). Another had him being assassinated on the high seas by frogmen (a theory retailed by a number of tabloids), or brutally beaten by unknown assailants, then tossed into the ocean. A third said he had committed suicide to avoid facing exposure and public humiliation (subscribed to by a large chorus of those I interviewed in England). A fourth argued that he had accidentally fallen off the slippery deck of his boat in the early morning hours and drowned (as his crew and family believed). A fifth, which appeared in *The Guardian,* was the wildest theory of them all; the normally sober newspaper, freed at last from the threat of the libel writs that Maxwell had used throughout his life to effectively silence his critics, speculated that the body identified by Elisabeth Maxwell was not that of her husband at all, but a corpulent substitute, and that Maxwell had done a world-class bunk.

More than once during our conversation, Betty Maxwell wondered where in this dark and twisted portrait of her husband she could find the familiar shape of the man she had known. Where, for instance, was the man who had—in her words—"cried his eyes out" at the bedside of their eldest son, Michael, who was critically injured in a car accident when he was fifteen and lay in a coma for six years before he died? Where was the man who had "revolutionized scientific publishing" with Pergamon Press? Where was the man who had performed all those acts of "unsung generosity"? Maxwell had helped fly children from the Chernobyl area to Israel, where they could receive proper medical treatment. And where was the man who just last March, on the eve of his triumphant acquisition of the New York *Daily News,* had thrown a lavish seventieth-birthday party for his wife in this very hotel, an event attended by bankers and tycoons, lords and peers, ambassadors and celebrities—the cream of British society—who were now denouncing him as a fraud?

No wonder Betty Maxwell was confused. She had lovingly preserved more than forty scrapbooks, bound each year in hand-tooled leather, of every article about and photograph of her husband that had ever been published since their marriage forty-six years ago. The clippings from one of those years alone weighed in at sixty pounds. Now, suddenly, she was forced to confront the awful realization that she had never known the full truth about the man she loved.

But then, after all, who had?

Almost thirty years ago, *The Sunday Times* of London made the first serious attempt to unravel the mystery of Robert Maxwell, a man born in abject poverty in the Carpathian Mountains of Czechoslovakia and originally named Jan Ludvik Hoch. A subsequent *Sunday Times* exposé of Maxwell was conducted amid what became a typical Maxwell counterbarrage—five libel actions, a demand by him to the publisher that the editor be fired, and the reporting of the editor for punishment to the House of Commons Committee of Privileges for printing that Maxwell had fiddled the figures when he was chairman of the committee that ran the members' restaurant.

Shortly after the newspaper began its reporting, in the early 1960s, Maxwell became a Labour member of Parliament, but his chameleonlike penchant for changing names—his own as well as those of his proliferating companies—was

"He bullied his sons. He castigated them. When he said 'Sign,' they signed!"

HEIRS TO DISASTER
Kevin, *far left*, and Ian Maxwell confront reporters probing the circumstances of their father's mysterious death.

barely known. Nor were very many people aware of Maxwell's obsession with appearances and titles. Long after he had been decorated with the Military Cross for bravery in World War II, Maxwell flouted British tradition by insisting that his name appear preceded by "Captain"—his rank when he was demobilized from the British Army—and followed by the imposing initials "M.C."

The British were at a loss as to what to make of this caddish, foreign upstart. Nicholas Tomalin of *The Sunday Times* compared him to Lord Beaverbrook, the legendary Canadian publisher. "Both came to Britain and conquered the most jealously guarded anti-foreigner, gentlemen's citadel of our national life," wrote Tomalin. "Both suffered calumnies from disgruntled natives swept aside by this process, and caused controversy as to just how wicked they were, which will last forever."

Now, years later, following Maxwell's death and the startling revelations about his complex, secretive life, there were those who saw an even more apt comparison, between Captain Bob and the character Augustus Melmotte, the bloated swindler at the heart of Anthony Trollope's novel *The Way We Live Now*. Like the fictional Melmotte—who commits suicide at the end of Trollope's masterpiece—Maxwell conducted mysterious dealings with foreign powers. He also compartmentalized his life, both professionally and personally, keeping each compartment sealed off from the others so that nobody ever knew exactly what he was up to. Even his wife, as it turned out, had been permitted to glimpse very few of these airtight compartments.

She admitted that he was an enigma. "He inflated himself for sometimes childish reasons," she said. "I think that came from his past." And then she told me of a remarkable incident from Maxwell's impoverished childhood in Czechoslovakia, where his mother had dreamed that her adored "Lajbi"—an only son—would become a respected rabbi. One day, without any discussion with his father, he cut off his *payess*, the corkscrew sidelocks that devout yeshiva students wear. In the rigidly patriarchal setting of the Jewish *shtetl*, this was an Oedipal rebellion of staggering proportions, an angry statement by the young Maxwell that he was determined to live by his own rules.

"I knew he had an enormous intelligence," Betty Maxwell told me, "but he must have been even more clever if he fooled so many people for so long. If some of the things that appeared to have happened in the last months of his life actually happened, they can only have been the acts of a desperate man. At the moment, people are terribly angry with Bob, and with characteristic anger they're just dishing the whole man. . . . Nothing gives me greater solace than to know that he is buried in Israel. If he had been buried here in Britain, God knows what would have happened to his grave. These British—they might have come in the night and ripped open his tomb and defaced his tombstone."

Whether she was conscious of it or not, Betty Maxwell seemed to be angry, too, for her husband had left her and her children in ruins and apparent penury. In its scope and drama, the saga of the Maxwells' fall was the stuff of Greek tragedy. For the past decade, Betty had been celebrated as the brilliant wife of one of the world's richest and most powerful men. She had been awarded a doctorate by Oxford University in 1981, at the age of sixty, and, though a French Huguenot, she was respected by Jewish scholars in Israel, the United States, and Europe for her research on the Holocaust. She was attended by a staff of eight at Headington Hill Hall, the family's baronial twenty-nine-room mansion, which Maxwell had leased for ninety-nine years from the Oxford city council and renovated at a cost of $1 million. She had the use of her own chauffeured Bentley. She traveled the world in her husband's Gulfstream IV and his sleek 180-foot yacht, the *Lady Ghislaine*, named after their strikingly beautiful daughter.

"But now," said his widow, "I'm in great financial difficulty. They've stopped my pension from M.G.N. [Mirror Group Newspapers]. The only person who has actually lost her pension is me; all the others have continued to be paid. My husband's will is impounded. I haven't salted away any-

thing, because I never for a minute believed that he'd leave me destitute. They say that I have £500,000. Those are lies. I haven't anything. It wasn't my way, of spiriting things away. Anyway, I didn't have access to funds.

"I was never involved in Bob's business," she continued. "I know absolutely nothing about Liechtenstein. I've never *been* in Liechtenstein. All I know is that the greatest disappointment for the press is there's going to be no money anywhere. And that is true also for my children. My daughter Ghislaine has no money, no trusts, no funds anywhere. The assets of my sons have been frozen. Poor Kevin—he's got to sell his house. Ian—the same thing. Neither of them had any money. Their father never gave them any money."

As far as the family was concerned, the mystery of how Maxwell died—whether by suicide, natural causes, or accident—was more than a subject for ghoulish speculation. On the one hand, if he deliberately threw himself into the ocean, the sheer cruelty of his last act was mind-boggling, since he had to know that he was leaving behind two of his sons to pay dearly for his sins. Death by natural causes such as a heart attack would not be covered by his $35.4 million accidental-death insurance policy. If, however, on the other hand, he perished as a result of an accident, his insurance policy would come into effect, and Elisabeth Maxwell would be eligible to collect about 5 percent, or $1.8 million, of the benefits.

"Of course, you could say that it is my self-interest in his death being declared an accident," Betty Maxwell told me. "With hindsight, you go from one end of the spectrum of speculation to another. But Bob was a fighter. I cannot see him committing suicide."

In fact, the family's first reaction was to suspect that Robert Maxwell had been murdered.

Late on Tuesday morning, November 5, Gus Rankin, the captain of the *Lady Ghislaine*, telephoned Kevin Maxwell from the harbor at Los Cristianos in Tenerife to inform him that his father was missing at sea. At thirty-two, Kevin was already his father's anointed successor; it was said of Kevin that although he resembled Betty physically he had inherited Bob's cold, calculating personality. Kevin raced across the hall on the ninth floor of Maxwell House, which is located off London's Holborn Circus, and burst into the office of his brother Ian, his senior by three years. Like Kevin, Ian was thin and good-looking, but he was known more for his easygoing charm than for his business acumen.

Together, they put in a call to their mother in Oxford. She agreed with them that Maxwell, who had been alone on his boat with a crew of eleven—one American, one Dane, and nine Britons—might well have been the victim of foul play. Thus, one of their first family decisions was to order a full-scale background check of the crew. They also decided that Betty would fly that same day to the Canary Islands with her eldest surviving son, Philip, a physicist, who has suffered from psychological problems, and who hadn't seen much of his father in recent years, because they didn't get along. Betty and Philip would be joined as soon as possible by Ghislaine, who spoke Spanish and could be helpful to her mother at the death scene.

Their suspicions were understandable, since Maxwell had been warning his family for some time that unspecified enemies were out to get him. Indeed, two weeks before his death he had met in the penthouse suite of New York's Helmsley Palace Hotel with Jules Kroll, the head of Kroll Associates, a worldwide private-investigation firm that specializes in work for corporate C.E.O.'s, multimillionaires, and politicians. Maxwell had ushered Kroll and two other men out onto the patio so that their conversation could not be overheard or bugged. Kroll had a thick dossier on Maxwell, compiled in the days when he had helped William Jovanovich, the chairman of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, beat off Maxwell's hostile takeover bid for that publishing conglomerate.

Now, to break the ice, Kroll reportedly said, "Let me start the conversation this way. I will never be on the other side of you again, whether this meeting results in an assignment or not. From here on in, you never have to worry about me being against you. I am conflicted out."

"It was a very solemn meeting, and it went on for a couple of hours," said one of the participants. "The sum and substance was that Maxwell was convinced that there were people out to get him, to destroy his empire, to cripple him financially, and to destroy his life and business in any way they could. He named businessmen and political enemies—his paper was the only national paper that supported the Labour Party—and he asked Kroll to undertake to find out who was behind all this. I remember Maxwell saying, 'It's one thing for people to speculate whether I'm overleveraged or if I can make this payment or that payment. But this is going far beyond that.' "

The meeting broke up with Maxwell's promising that he would send Kroll what he called "a memorandum of suspicions and unexplained events." "Maxwell was working on this compendium," said the participant, "when he met his death." Kroll Associates was never formally hired.

When I told Betty Maxwell about this meeting—of which she had had no knowledge—she didn't seem at all surprised. "Nearly 10 million people were reading Bob's newspapers every day," she said, "and everything was being done by his enemies to ruin the man and discredit his Mirror papers. A conspiracy definitely existed to destroy him."

There was no doubt that Maxwell was feeling beleaguered. His most dangerous enemies, however, were not composed of flesh and blood, but were creations of his mind. Maxwell was a food addict, and like some people who suffer from eating disorders, he exhibited symptoms of a classic manic-depressive. The bouts of paranoia from which he suffered in the final months of his life were fed by the knowledge that his grandiose dream of transforming himself from the owner of a prosperous but unglamorous printing company into the creator of a media conglomerate spanning the globe—a company on the scale of Time Warner, Bertelsmann, and his archrival, Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation—would never become a reality.

He had overextended himself in the late eighties, when he went on a buying spree in the United States and borrowed $3.35 billion to purchase the publisher Macmillan and the Official Airline Guides. "He was offended and upset that he was seen as merely a printer," said Peter Jay, a former Brit-

ish ambassador to the United States and Maxwell's chief of staff for three years, from 1986 to 1989. "He was determined to go and demonstrate to the world that he was a publisher as well."

And he didn't stop there; he also bought companies in France, Israel, and Eastern Europe. Like many other speculators, he was betting that the good times would roll on, and that he could pay off what he owed with the cash flow from inflated dollars. But as the world economy cooled off in the nineties, he found himself running out of money, and things started to go from bad to worse.

By last spring, he had sold Pergamon Press, a publisher of scientific journals and reference books, which was the foundation stone of his empire. He also tried to shed some of his interests in Israel and announced plans to sell 49 percent of the stock of the Mirror newspaper group. As collateral for his staggering private loans, he had put up the shares of his public companies, but short sellers were driving down the value of the stock. Maxwell responded by using his secrecy-shrouded trusts in Liechtenstein and his privately owned companies to shuffle around hundreds of millions of dollars in a scheme to buy his own stock in order to boost its price and thereby prop up the collateral that underpinned his bank loans. Eventually, he would go as far as to siphon off money from the pension funds and treasury of the Mirror newspapers, and manipulate shares of stock in Berlitz International, owned by Maxwell Communications, by pledging them to nine different parties.

There was nothing new about his shady dealings; he had been switching debts and assets around among his dozens of companies for the better part of forty years. In the early seventies, after Maxwell tried similar shenanigans in a failed attempt to swindle the American financier Saul Steinberg, two inspectors from Britain's Department of Trade and Industry declared Maxwell unfit to run a public company. "An element of desperation is apparent in Mr. Maxwell's actions at this time," they wrote. "He seems to have solved his dilemma by escaping from the frying pan in the hope that the fire could be quenched when he landed in it."

Despite his badly scarred reputation, Maxwell had little trouble raising money for a comeback, leading some observers, such as Lord Weidenfeld, the publisher of Weidenfeld & Nicolson, to speculate that the funds came from the Soviet Union. Nor, for that matter, did Maxwell have trouble in more recent years in lining up many prestigious firms in the United States. He was represented by investment bankers at Lehman Brothers, Rothschild Inc., Salomon Brothers, and Goldman, Sachs. (Indeed, after Maxwell's death, Goldman, Sachs came under investigation in Britain and the United States for possibly having helped Maxwell drive up the price of the stock.) He managed to borrow more than $1 billion from National Westminster Bank, the Swiss Bank Corporation, Citibank, and Bankers Trust. He was represented by such tony law firms as Willkie Farr & Gallagher and Skadden, Arps.

Last March, in the face of all his financial troubles—and in a stunning display of Maxwellian chutzpah—he bought the New York *Daily News*. "I met with him the day after he bought the paper," recalled Liz Smith, whose gossip column was appearing in the *News* at the time. "I was taken to his enormous boat by [then *Daily News* publisher] Jim Hoge. Maxwell showed me pictures of his children and told me that he had been happily married to the same woman for forty-six years. He and Hoge were arguing over who would be called publisher. Hoge made an effort to convince me to stay, when he knew *he* couldn't stick it out, because Maxwell was a real piece of work. Maxwell offered me a $15,000 annual raise—this after I'd been there for fifteen years and killed myself for the *News*—and it just wasn't enough."

Maxwell's reception in New York surprised even him. "After he bought the *Daily News*," said Robert Pirie, his investment banker, the president of Rothschild Inc., "I picked him up at his boat. He liked Chinese food, so I decided to take him to Fu's, which is the best Chinese restaurant in the city. As we drove up First Avenue, people would recognize him, and open their car doors and come out and shake his hand. At Fu's, the entire restaurant got up on its feet and started clapping. He was overwhelmed. He told me, 'In my whole life in London, no one's ever acted like this. I'm here a month and look what's happening.' "

"He always said that he immigrated to the wrong country," Betty Maxwell told me. "He was tremendously loyal to Britain, but people here couldn't understand a character like him. Nothing of that man's life would have been the same in America. Everything would have come his way."

Just to make sure of that, Maxwell assembled a high-priced group of prominent consultants and lawyers to help him make his way in America. The roster included former senators Howard Baker and John Tower and Republican Party stalwart Robert Keith Gray, who was director of communications for the 1980 Reagan-Bush campaign.

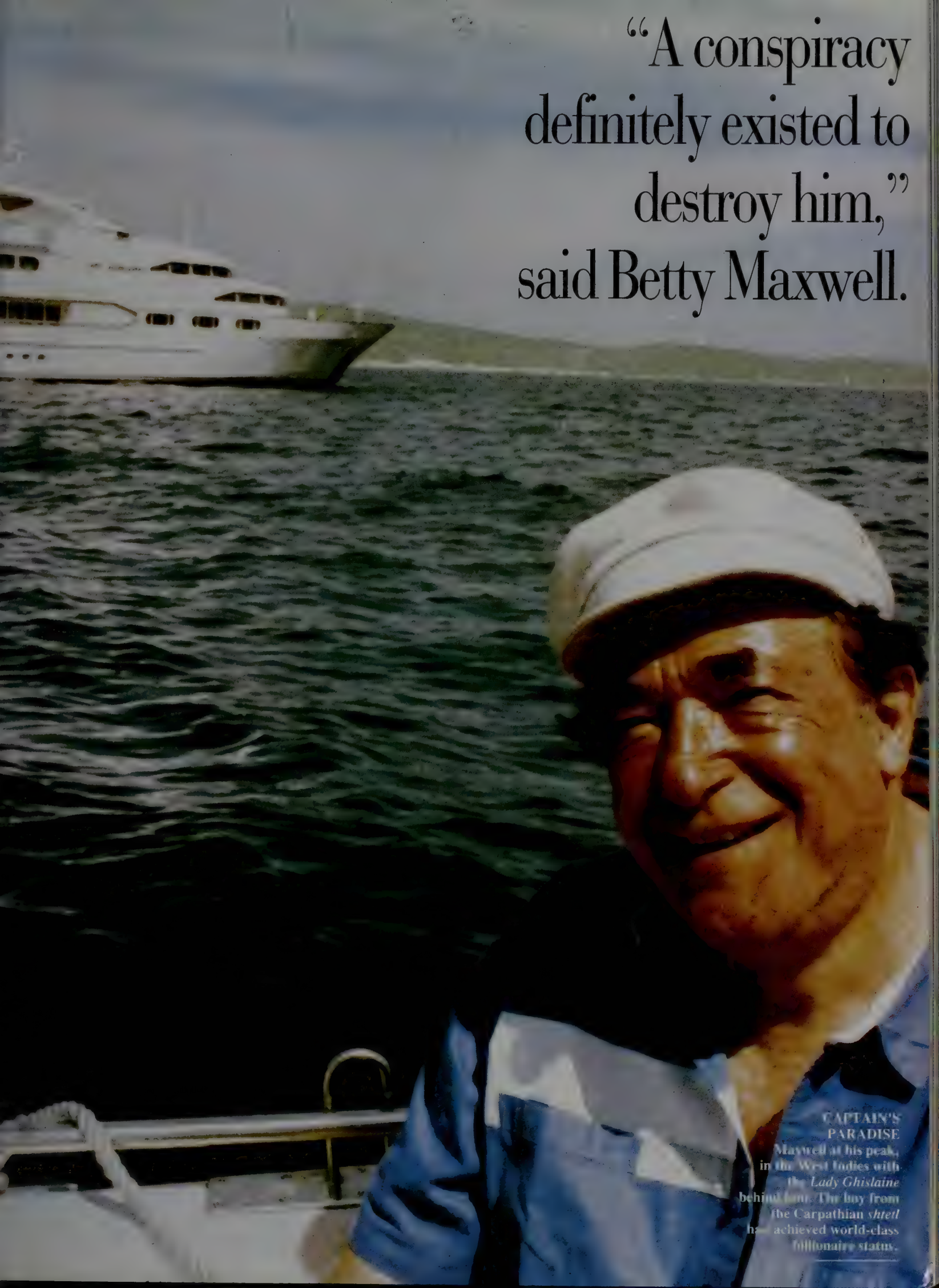
Soon Maxwell was being courted by Edgar Bronfman, Laurence Tisch, and other luminaries of the New York Jewish community. He attended the Gridiron dinner in Washington. He lunched with President Bush. He sat in the reviewing stand, along with General Norman Schwarzkopf, when the Desert Storm troops were given a ticker-tape parade up Broadway. He showed up at a favorite watering hole of the rich and famous, the Round Hill resort on the island of Jamaica, where he rented a villa for himself and his guest, a Jamaican woman.

He was often attended by at least two personal assistants—a cosmetician, who regularly gave his thick eyebrows and slicked-back hair a dose of black dye, and an attractive blonde secretary. "He was a very crude man," said Martha Smilgis, a writer who followed Maxwell around while reporting a profile for *Time* magazine. "His polish was not very deep. If you were with him for any length of time, it peeled away. I was in his library in the Maxwell House penthouse—a beautiful apartment with marble and servants all over the place—and while I was admiring his books, his valet said to me, 'You should see Mr. Maxwell's collection of pornographic tapes.'... He hated to share attention with anybody else in the room.... He wanted to be center stage. He wanted to be in control all the time."

He charmed many Americans with stories about his friendships with the high and mighty. *(Continued on page 238)*

MIKE MALONEY

"A conspiracy definitely existed to destroy him," said Betty Maxwell.



CAPTAIN'S PARADISE
Maxwell at his peak, in the West Indies with the *Lady Ghislaine* behind him. The boy from the Carpathian *shtetl* had achieved world-class billionaire status.

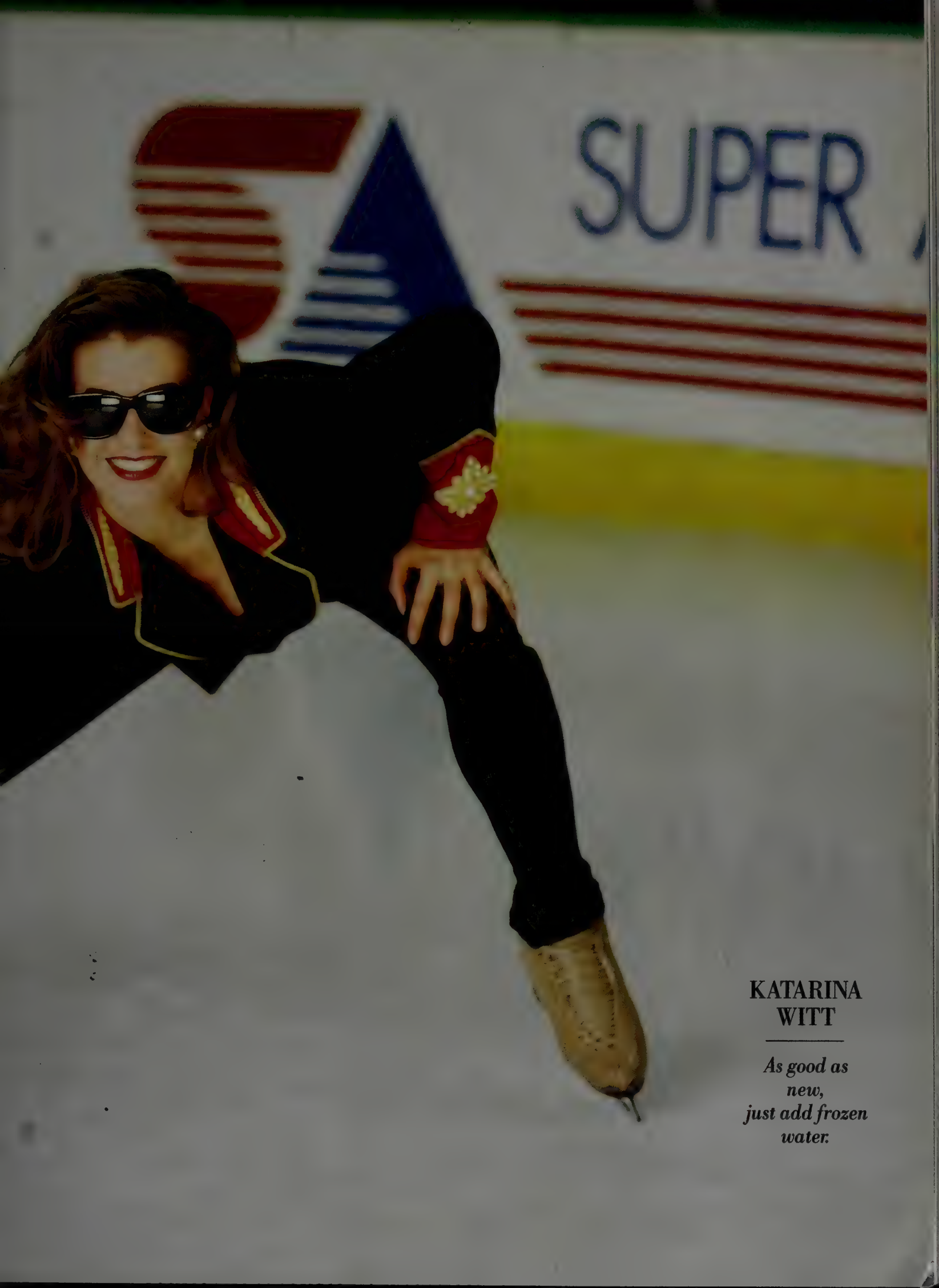
Cool as Ice

At twenty-six, Katarina Witt has been cooling her heels a long time. She was only ten when blade-eyed East German coaching legend Jutta Müller began sculpting her skating routines and, after practice, showed her how a little eyeliner under her Prussian blues could make her "the beautiful face of socialism." Prima Katarina's velvet pout and stormy brow line soon became East Germany's hood ornament. In country, she played the comrade-next-door, but abroad she cruised past mouth-breathing Westerners in shorty costumes that showed more goose bumps than sequins. Enemy coaches sniped that Witt was the soul of brevity, but the ice queen smoothly carved out two Olympic golds and four world championships.

The last of the hot Red lovers, Witt was in Seville filming her wordless role in HBO's *Carmen on Ice* when the Brandenburg Gate swung open. Her doey eyes were caught in the headlights: Westerners tagged her as a dated Communist model, while East Germans resented her as an athletic apparatchik. An old hand on thin ice, she quickly regained her balance, even pirouetting through the requisite celebrity episode of being stalked by a lovesick fan. Now she's as good as new, just add frozen water. Currently double-axeling with American Olympian Brian Boitano in a wholesome capitalist show called "Chrysler Skating '92," Witt is also thawing her Teutonic consonants to be an expert commentator for CBS at the Winter Olympics. From here on, it's all Diet Coke, Danskins, Du Pont, and dollars. Ice Ice Baby! —MICHAEL CARUSO

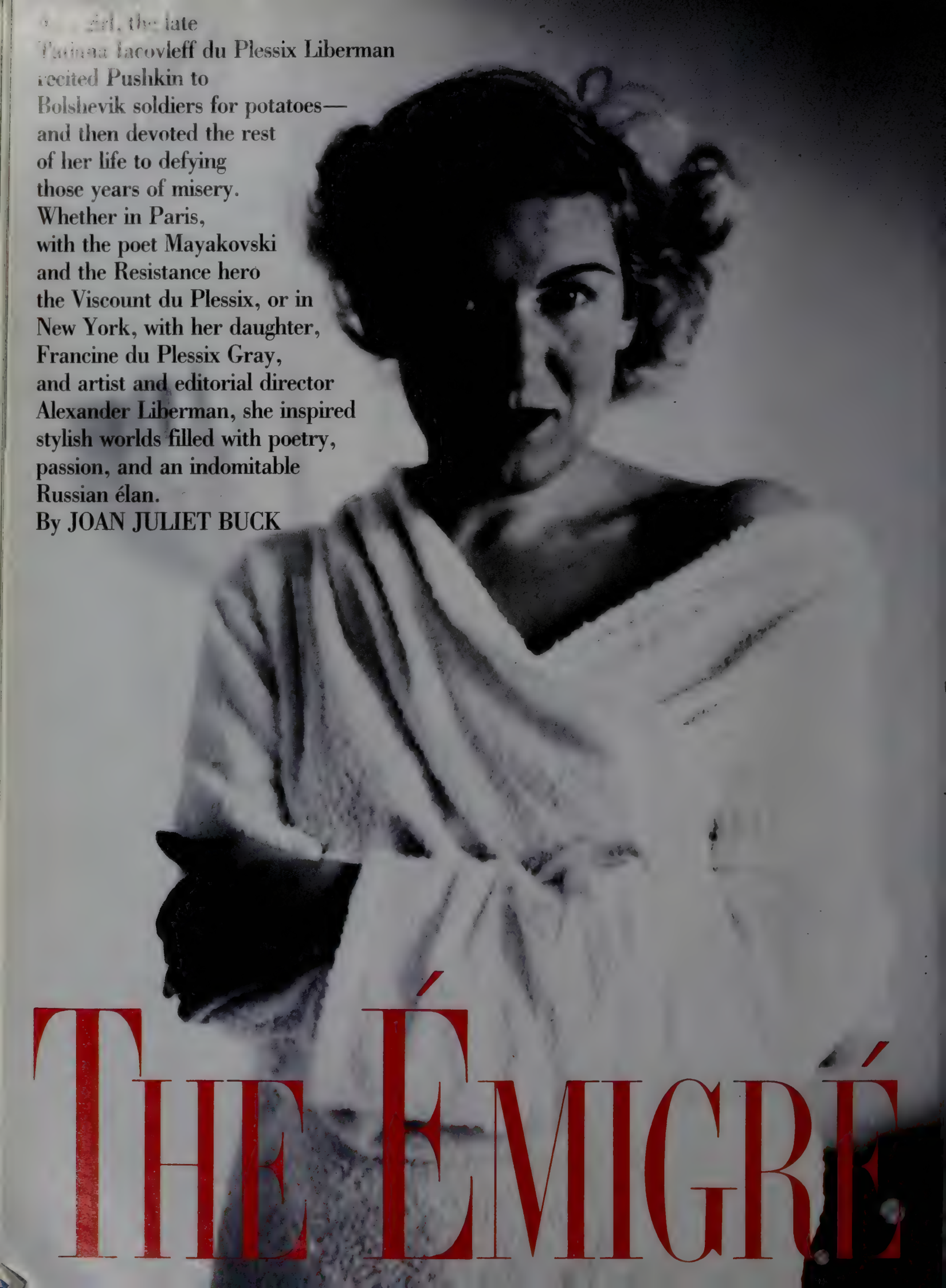
Photograph by FIROOZ ZAHEDI

STYLED BY EILEEN KASOFSKY; HAIR AND MAKEUP BY ENZO LAERA FOR ALDO COPPOLA; JACKET BY NINA K.; EARRINGS BY JOSE AND MARIA BARRERA; SUNGLASSES BY DONNA KARAN



KATARINA WITT

As good as new, just add frozen water.



THE ÉMIGRÉ

As a girl, the late Tatiana Iacovleff du Plessix Liberman recited Pushkin to Bolshevik soldiers for potatoes—and then devoted the rest of her life to defying those years of misery. Whether in Paris, with the poet Mayakovski and the Resistance hero the Viscount du Plessix, or in New York, with her daughter, Francine du Plessix Gray, and artist and editorial director Alexander Liberman, she inspired stylish worlds filled with poetry, passion, and an indomitable Russian élan.

By JOAN JULIET BUCK

MUSE

"AS ONE"

Tatiana and Alexander Liberman in Stony Brook, Long Island, in 1943. *Opposite*, Tatiana photographed by Liberman in the South of France, 1939. "I'd say, 'Why didn't you tell me that?' and she'd answer, 'It never crossed my mind. I think you're me.'"

FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

Top to bottom:
Tatiana and her little sister, Lila, sporting Paris outfits,
in St. Petersburg with their aunt Sandra, who is holding her daughter;
Vladimir Mayakovski in Moscow shortly before his suicide;
Tatiana and Bertrand du Plessix at Sainte-Maxime in the early thirties.

In a room at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., the Nobel Prize–winning poet searched for a metaphor: "I see some sword, something swordlike. It's about words, and it's ancient and noble and shining. I'm thinking about some notion to do with a court—not a queen, but a touch of monarchy. She looked formidable, like an allegory of Art. Demanding: Art is demanding. Nothing lax about art, or about her."

In Connecticut, the painter said, "Anybody in her life had to be the best—the best artist, the best grandchild, the best tailor, the best son-in-law. But then, she was the best mother-in-law."

In Paris, the scientist said, "The first time I met her was in a nightclub in Belgium in 1937. It was a long, low room, with the tables all crowded together. I was sitting at the far end, by the stage. She came in the door and had no way of getting to us, so she climbed up on a table and with absolutely no embarrassment walked across the tables the whole length of the room as if it were the most natural thing in the world."

Joseph Brodsky, Cleve Gray, and Jacques Le Beau were describing Tatiana Iacovleff du Plessix Liberman, who died last April at the age of eighty-four. She was known in New York as the wife of Alexander Liberman, painter, sculptor, and editorial director of Condé Nast. The obituaries in *The New York Times* and *Women's Wear Daily* described her as a designer of hats, eschewing the simpler term "milliner." In the Soviet Union, after years of being a nonperson, she was publicly acknowledged from 1955 on as the last great love of the poet Vladimir Mayakovski. The mother of the writer Francine du Plessix Gray, she was an imposing presence whose unconditional but selective enthusiasm was sought by generations of artists in all fields.

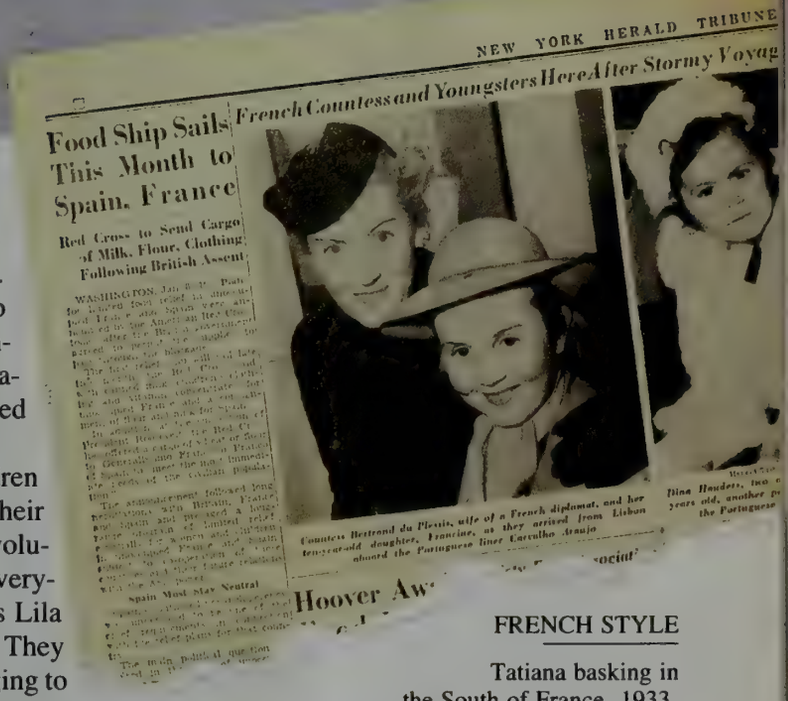
She was described by a magazine in the eighties as "a cross between Marlene Dietrich and a Tartar tribeswoman"; Geraldine Stutz, the former president of Henri Bendel, said she "put herself together with shawls and stoles like a Russian war goddess." It was not just her height or her sense of style but also her combination of worldly sophistication and primitive, instinctual candor that both attracted and terrified people. She had survived starvation in Russia by reciting poetry for food; in the second half of her life, writers, scientists, designers, and dancers did their utmost to impress her in the Libermans' white salon on Seventieth Street. Both the metaphors of art and the hyperbole of style applied to her. As a young émigré in Paris, she had turned to style for survival, but it was her definitive pronouncements and vast culture that drew to her such people as Joseph Brodsky, who says, "Some people are deprived enough by circumstances to live solely by culture; for others it is a luxury. She started in the first category and moved to the second. It's the recognition that if life doesn't respond to the standards suggested by literature it's an unworthy life."

Alex Liberman explains: "Tatiana had a very clear idea of what could and what couldn't be done. It was like a strong moral code. Her aesthetics were practically a moral code." Their relationship was a romance of uncommon consistency and epic dimensions; they met when he was a boy, came together in the late thirties, fled to America at the beginning of the war, married in 1942, and were, all their friends could see, "as one."

"We had a lot of instincts in common," says Liberman. "In general, Tatiana found talking too much unhealthy; she said it ruined relationships. Everything was in short, perceptive flashes. Sometimes I'd say, 'Why didn't you tell me that?' and she'd answer, 'It never crossed my mind. I think you're me.' "

Her conversation, says Brodsky, was "all quote, unquote, interwoven into sentences; it was all the time paraphrase, pun reference, the discourse between Russians of a certain terrain—people for whom language is oxygen."

She chose her oxygen: although she spoke French, in her fifty years in America she never really learned En-



FRENCH STYLE

Tatiana basking in the South of France, 1933. *Above*, the January 9, 1941, *New York Herald Tribune* announces: "Countess Bertrand du Plessix, wife of a French diplomat, and her ten-year-old daughter, Francine, as they arrived from Lisbon."

glish. Her grandson Thaddeus recalls her asking, "Alex, pochemu la piscine n'est pas heated?"

Tatiana Iacovleff was born in St. Petersburg in 1906, the daughter of an engineer who moved his family to the isolated provincial town of Penza, where he was building an opera house. Her grandmother had been the first woman to graduate from the University of St. Petersburg; her uncle, Alexander Iacovleff, was a painter, and Konstantin Stanislavsky and Alexsandr Herzen were distant relatives. The family was of the *petite noblesse*, or educated upper class, but not of the White Russian nobility that fought against the Revolution. Tatiana's strong character was apparent early. "She had a huge power over people," says her sister, Lila, now the Duchesse de Caylus. "She could do anything." In Lila's photograph album there are pictures of carriages and little girls in white dresses on an empty plain. During the First World War, their father was in the army, and went to San Francisco to buy ammunition. He was stranded there during the Revolution, jobless and stateless. He changed his name to Jackson, became a mechanic in a garage, divorced Tatiana's mother, and married another Russian woman.

His first wife and children remained in Penza, where their house was looted by the revolutionaries ("They took everything but the books," says Lila de Caylus) and boarded up. They were persecuted for belonging to the wrong class, lived in hovels, scrambled to survive. Tatiana's mother remarried twice. There was no food, no fuel, and what school there was was Soviet. Penza was the center of the great famine of the early twenties. They made soup from nettles; Tatiana saw cases of cannibalism. She recited poetry, even to Red Army soldiers, in exchange for potatoes. "She was extremely beautiful, very blonde, very tall," says Liberman. "I think the soldiers loved the poetry and loved the girl."

Poetry is close to the Russian heart, and to know it by heart is both an act of memory and a mystical communion. Joseph Brodsky made that point in his essay on Nadezhda Mandelstam when he said that the probable reason she was able to write such accomplished memoirs was that she knew Mandelstam's poetry by heart; its rhythms informed her ability to express herself. Tatiana Iacov-

[illegible]

[illegible]feld's
[illegible] *Women*,
Tatiana with
[illegible] at sixteen
in the house on
Seventieth Street, 1946.
Opposite, April 1945
Vogue cover,
featuring the hats of
Tatiana of Saks.

The social life rankled Tatiana's daughter. "I meticulously went about being the opposite of what she was."

leff, like many girls of her generation, loved poetry: it stood in for other diversions. Her prodigious memory never lagged. She recited enormous amounts of Pushkin, Lermontov, Blok, and Esenin to the soldiers, and fifty, sixty, seventy years later to her grandchildren at Thanksgiving. At the end of her life her memory still held. Iuri Tiourin, an émigré doctor and critic and a recent friend, says, "It was the melody that allowed her to learn it and keep it. If she got a line wrong, she would know at once, because the music wasn't there."

But poetry did not save her from contracting tuberculosis, on top of malnutrition. Her uncle, Alexander Iacovleff, was already living in Paris, as were her grandmother and her aunt Sandra Iacovleff, an opera singer. Alexander Iacovleff was the official painter of the great transcontinental expeditions made by André-Gustave Citroën, the auto magnate, who arranged through the French Embassy to get Tatiana out of Russia, with the help of the Red Cross. She arrived in Paris by train in 1925, with her poetry, a hunger for glamour and success, a hatred of anything Soviet. She had height, beauty, and claustrophobia.

Alexander Liberman was already in Paris; his father, Simon, though a Menshevik, had been a close economic adviser to Lenin. When he knew he was being sent on a mission to London in 1921 to secure a trade agreement, he asked if

TATIANA'S WORLDS

Top to bottom. Tatiana with Christian Dior at Dior's home outside Paris, 1950; Tatiana, third from left, lunches with Charlotte Harris, Chessy Patcévitch, and Anne Ford;

Alex and Tatiana with Nelson and Happy Rockefeller at the governor's home for the installation of a Liberman sculpture; Tatiana with Philippe and Pauline de Rothschild on Ischia.

he could take the nine-year-old Alexander with him. Lenin, Trotsky, and Dzerzhinsky met to discuss the matter; Dzerzhinsky was against it but finally relented. Simon Liberman left his son under the supervision of the future Soviet ambassador Krassin; the boy was put in an English boarding school.

When Lenin died in 1924, Simon Liberman took to sleeping with a razor under his pillow; he left Moscow for Paris in 1925, to join his wife, Henriette, who had started the first state-run children's theater in the world, to divert the hungry children of Moscow. In Paris, Henriette, who lived in a free, bohemian way, had met Alexander Iacovleff and fallen in love with him. Not long after Tatiana arrived, Uncle Alexander took her to his friend Henriette Pascar Liberman and said, "*Habille-moi cette sauvage*" ("Dress this savage for me"). The nineteen-year-old Tatiana and the thirteen-year-old Alexander met in 1925, but went separate ways for the next twelve years.

The commodity that was to enable the luckier White Russian émigrés to survive in Paris was not a memory for poetry but a certain mien and style. "They were practically a special race," says Alex Liberman. "Born of intermarriages with the English and the German aristocracy, they were all tall, handsome, civilized. In a way, they had a lot of the qualities of perfectly trained headwaiters." In America, Obolenskys married Astors; in Paris, aristocrats opened restaurants, and the women made jewelry and hats or did complicated embroidery; the young and beautiful ones modeled. "Most of the great fashion models at Vionnet, Poiret, Chanel in the twenties and thirties were White Russian women. Tatiana modeled—not very much—and posed for fashion photographs. Piguet was a great admirer of hers and lent her clothes. She was extremely elegant, always involved in the latest fashions."

Tatiana had been in Paris for three years, and had acquired the patina she craved. One of her friends and fellow émigrés was Elsa Triolet, who would go on to marry the poet Louis Aragon and be the first woman to win the Goncourt Prize for fiction; she was also the sister of Lili Brik, who lived in Moscow with her husband, Osip Brik, and the poet Vladimir Mayakovski in what was considered a shocking ménage à trois. And for the moment, being a female émigré, Elsa survived by making "barbaric" necklaces for Schiaparelli. One day, when Tatiana had a bad cold and was headed for the doctor's, Elsa insisted that she come over. "Elsa wanted Mayakovski to meet a nice, good-looking girl so he wouldn't be bored," says Iuri Tiourin. "Tatiana had no idea he would be there, and she had never met him before."

Mayakovski was in Paris for two reasons, to discuss a film (apart from being the official bard of the Revolution, he also directed and acted in films) and to buy a car. In a letter to Mayakovski in October 1928, Lili Brik reminded him: "*About the car*. Don't forget (1) bumpers front and back, (2) an extra searchlight at the side, (3) an electric wiper for the front windscreen, (4) a light at the back with the word 'stop' on it, (5) it absolutely must have electric arrows showing where the car is turning," which suggests either tremendous vagueness in the poet or the extreme simplicity of Soviet cars at the time.

In his poem "Letter from Paris to Comrade Kostrov on the Nature of Love," Mayakovski wrote:

> . . .Just imagine:
> into the room sails
> a beauty
> in fur and pearls
> And I to her
> speak thus—
> I come,
> comrade,
> from Russia
> in my country
> I am famous.

She was twenty-two, he was thirty-five: they were both tall, of the same build. "You're *(Continued on page 224)*

"Not a queen, but a touch of monarchy," says Joseph Brodsky. "She looked formidable, like an allegory of Art."

FASHION ICON

A 1942 watercolor drawing of Tatiana by R. Bouché. One magazine called her "a cross between Marlene Dietrich and a Tartar tribeswoman."

Phoenix Rising

Who can beat drugs? As the following testimonies illustrate, anyone can—even in a social landscape ravaged by crack, homelessness, and AIDS—with the right support. These survivors, and thousands like them, have taken back control of their lives through Phoenix House, which this month proudly celebrates twenty-five years of real victory in the war on drugs

The man with the necktie is Dr. Mitch Rosenthal, who represents the reason the other people in this photograph are smiling. Rosenthal is the president of the Phoenix House Foundation—America's largest private, nonprofit drug-abuse program—which this month marks its twenty-fifth anniversary with a dinner (sponsored by *V.F.*) at the U.S. Customs House

Photographs by RUEDI HOFMANN

Dr. Mitch Rosenthal, in shirt and tie, is surrounded by fourteen Phoenix House success stories—addicts whose lives have been restored to them.

Manhattan on March 11. The group gathered here can surely that there is cause to celebrate. They are among the more than 50,000 who have been treated by Phoenix House—in outpatient, residential, or self-contained high-school programs—over the past two and a half decades. Their backgrounds vary radically, from upper-middle-class suburbs to inner-city tenements; so do the methods with which they chose to anesthetize themselves against, as one of them puts it, "a world that seemed so crazy." But each—like 60 percent of the people who now staff the Phoenix House empire—has experienced his or her own season in hell as a substance abuser.

Phoenix House was created by five recovering heroin addicts who met in a Manhattan detox center and, in May 1967, set up supportive house together in two rooms in an Upper West Side flophouse. They soon came to the attention of Rosenthal—then deputy commissioner of New York's new addiction-services agency—who brought to the men, he says, "a conceptual framework of dynamic psychiatry to give them the tools for taking that group energy and focusing it on the individual." By that fall, there were four Phoenix House centers; today, there are fourteen on the East and West coasts. Throughout the succeeding vicissitudes of drug abuse in America—the decreasing age of first-time users, the recent erosion of government support, and the devastating advent of crack and AIDS among inner-city addicts—the Phoenix philosophy of mutual support has remained, productively, much the same. The individual histories which follow are success stories, told by people who are now, among other things, graduate students, a film actor, a designer, a telecommunications specialist, and social workers. But they all will tell you that they have fixed in their minds images of far darker times against which they measure everything that has followed. —BEN BRANTLEY

Carlos Pagan
52

Born in Puerto Rico and reared in Brooklyn, he was twenty-six and already a heroin user of twelve years when, at his family's insistence, he checked into a Manhattan detox ward in 1967. There he met "a few guys who were talking about this thing called therapy." Pooling their welfare checks, they moved into an S.R.O. hotel on West Eighty-fifth Street. And Phoenix House was born. Within weeks, Mitch Rosenthal was on board. "We were just five guys with an idea. Mitch perfected that dream." Pagan would move on to start two similar programs: Project Return in Manhattan and El Regreso in his old Brooklyn neighborhood, both based on "the philosophy that got me here."

David Stott
26

The son of a stock specialist in Manhattan, he lost his mother at seventeen. Reacting to his father's subsequent marriage with rebellion and hostility ("I was 260 pounds with a mohawk"), he left home. After one semester of college, he took an apartment in Manhattan, where within eight months he went through "about $100,000" of his maternal inheritance, spent mostly on cocaine and marijuana. At twenty, he checked into Phoenix House in Orange County, California, which allowed him, he says, "the opportunity to map out a new blueprint for adult behavior—something I was unfamiliar with." He is now an intern at *Spy* magazine.

Paul Fishbein
40

He was a graduate student in California in "a medical environment with access to drugs a lot of people have never heard of," as well as cocaine, morphine, and heroin. Drug-related "legal problems" brought him to the newly created Phoenix facility in Orange County. "Because I was a little better educated, it took me longer than most to see that a lot of what I knew didn't mean anything in terms of being happy." Now a technical-systems specialist in telecommunications, he says he knows "I've got to keep working on myself; there are always those demons in the background."

Jennifer Irani-Fishbein
32

Married to Paul Fishbein since 1988, she grew up "middle-class" in Huntington Beach, California, and was shooting heroin by sixteen, feeling "like I had ten layers of insulation." She entered Phoenix in Orange County in 1982—"It's regimented, but so is the drug life-style"—and went on to get her bachelor's degree in studio art. She is now an artist and a clothing designer with her own label, Manic Impressions. "After you've gone through that kind of thing, you tend to be an overachiever."

Fran Robinson Bass
35

She began using soft drugs at thirteen, while a student "at one of the nation's top ten high schools," in Manhattan, and graduated to cocaine and heroin. All daily activities "required some sort of anesthetizer." At twenty-five, she dropped out of graduate school to enter Phoenix's former Riverside facility in Manhattan. Though she briefly left the program—"I felt if I still felt like getting high I wasn't salvageable"—she returned to complete it. She is now working on her Ph.D. in clinical psychology.

Ali Abdul Wahhab
28

At twenty, he was making good money doing construction work in Flatbush, Brooklyn, and spending most of it on cocaine, which was eroding both his bank account and his libido. "If you don't have the urge of sex and you don't have no money, then why are you living?" He checked himself into the Phoenix Academy in Yorktown, New York, and

graduated with his high-school diploma. The program taught him to deal "with uncomfortability and rejection." An essential mind-set for a film actor, which is what he's become, with parts in Matty Rich's *Straight out of Brooklyn* and Spike Lee's upcoming *Malcolm X*.

Matt Caruso
17

A veteran of two previous rehab programs, he was taken to the Rockleigh Academy by his mother after he developed a daily cocaine habit, which he was stealing jewelry to support. At first, "I had everybody there convinced I was evil." The turning point came several months into treatment, when he got caught bringing drugs onto the campus. "I think about that every single day now, about how many people I hurt." After graduating this year, he hopes to attend college and become a landscaper. "The biggest thing they give you," he says, "is time."

Alden T. Lewis
41

He began using drugs in high school in the Bronx, but got good grades and went on to an Ivy League university, where he dealt and took heroin, "attending class on occasion." After a series of "maybe twenty" drug arrests, he was directed by the court to Phoenix's Bronx residential program. "The disciplinary aspect was a bit severe for me at the time," but he stayed for three and a half years and later got his law degree. Today he has his own practice in Brooklyn and is married with three children.

Zoraida Milian
31

Growing up in the Bronx in a family where drugs were used, she found herself taking care of four brothers and sisters and an invalid grandmother. By ten, she had started heroin "to get energy." Though her drug use—often in shooting galleries—accelerated, at twenty-three she got a job in the computer room at Calvin Klein, where she quickly advanced. She continued to use heroin daily and began smoking crack; finally one day, after five years at the job, she simply didn't show up. She exhausted her bank account, lost her apartment, and wound up on the street, "selling my body." One morning she woke up in a hospital, with no idea of how she had gotten there ("They say I was either thrown out of a car or a window"), bleeding internally and pregnant. She planned to have the child, but learned it would be born without legs, so she had it aborted. She was able to go into Phoenix's Long Island City facility directly from the hospital. She had assumed she would test positive for H.I.V. and felt "there's no sense in me fixing up my life." When the results were negative, "something changed deep inside of me." She is now an eleven-month resident and the house coordinator. "I feel like I'm growing up again," she says. "I've got some of my childhood back."

Chris Migliaccio
18

He grew up in Hackettstown, New Jersey, and was using cocaine by fifteen, heroin by sixteen. "I robbed a lot of people. I lied. I did it all." He stole enough money from his parents' Laundromat "to make them sell it." He is now in the academy in Rockleigh, New Jersey, where "they make it sort of rough to lie to them. I actually like myself today." He plans to go to culinary school, because, "believe it or not, when I used to get high, I wouldn't go home to eat. So I learned to cook for myself."

Wendy Lieberman
25

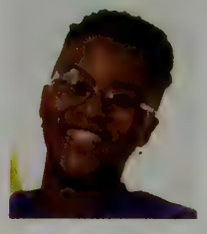
The daughter of two physicians in Scarsdale, New York, she had a tense, combative relationship with her parents in high school and was using pot and hallucinogens "to knock out reality." Her parents enrolled her in Phoenix's IMPACT, an outpatient program which features family as well as peer-group therapy. "I'm very good at seeming like everything's O.K.," she says; the program taught her "to confront things." She is now working for her master's degree in social work.

Julie Daniel
17

She grew up in Montclair, New Jersey, where a relative introduced her to marijuana when she was thirteen. At sixteen, she began using cocaine with a boyfriend, a dealer. She spent time in a rehab center and a halfway house before entering Phoenix's New Jersey academy, where she is in her fifth month. "It's like, Maybe I don't really need to get high. I thought everybody else in the world got high, just like me."

Jabbar Collins
19

A veteran of reefer and crack by his mid-teens, he became "the super-stickup-kid of the project" in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. "I would snatch jewelry, stick up drug dealers—that's what I was really known for." He did time in a juvenile detention center and Rikers Island, but returned to crack and theft, stealing regularly from his mother and girlfriend, by whom he has a son, now four. A year ago, he came home incapacitated from crack he had bought after selling his brother's $300 coat, and his mother checked him into a Manhattan detox center, from which he went into induction at Phoenix House. "I never felt so useless," he says. "I crawled into treatment." Now a student at the Yorktown, New York, academy, he has won two prizes for essay writing and hopes to study journalism.



Jennifer Chollette
22

A native of Ridgewood, Queens, she had a tense relationship with her father, an engineer, and was regularly drinking and smoking pot by early adolescence. By fifteen, she was sleeping in Manhattan shelters and the Port Authority Bus Terminal, stealing to survive. She saw herself in a CBS documentary and thought, My God, how could I have let myself turn into this? One of the show's producers introduced her to the Phoenix program, and she graduated from its Yorktown academy in 1988. She is now getting her degree in social work in North Carolina. □

Zoran is the imperious Yugoslav-born fashion designer whose starkly elegant clothes are making a strong comeback for the repentant nineties. But as BEN BRANTLEY notes, the domineering designer still takes pride in insulting his celebrity clients and is doing his best to alienate everyone who counts in the business

Zoran

Zoran with his client Isabella Rossellini. It's easiest to understand Zoran's fashion system as a Gap for the very rich.

Zeitgeist

Photographs by ERIC BOMAN

"He'll wake up, he'll wake up, don't worry," Isabella Rossellini was told by the friend who had brought her to the naked Greenwich Village loft one afternoon in the early eighties. Having recently begun a career in modeling, the actress daughter of Ingrid Bergman had decided it was time to assemble an appropriately fashionable wardrobe and arrived nervously at the apartment-showroom of Zoran, the minimalist cult designer from Yugoslavia, with a head full of cinematic images of "the countess going to the couturier, and the models coming in and showing you clothes." But there were no models, no hand-kissing assistants, no changing room, not even a chair to sit on. Just a rack of a lot of Spartan, shapeless-seeming clothes and "this weird bearded guy" stretched out on a futon on an elevated sleep shelf with a ladder. Even more bafflingly, when he awoke, Zoran didn't seem at all keen on selling her anything. "It was very strange," recalls Rossellini. "I think he thought, This European is going to ruin my clothes by wearing jewelry or something. He came down and he said the worst things about every person he thought I might know—Mother's colleagues or European jet set. He insulted them all."

Rossellini today estimates that 70 to 80 percent of what she wears is by Zoran. Though she declined his subsequent offer "to come to my house and throw out everything I had so he could redo it," gradually she converted to the Zoran code of zipperless, buttonless, padless, geometric clothes which alter little, if at all, from year to year. She's not alone. Zoran's list of private clients rivals that of Halston, his predecessor in unadorned chic, in his heyday: American blue bloods (Flora Biddle, Amanda Burden), screen stars (Lauren Bacall, Candice Bergen), political wives (Queen Noor, Tipper Gore), and high bohemians (the painters Jennifer Bartlett and Jan Hashey). But no matter what their status, most of them can expect that if they show up at Zoran's looking, by his standards, ostentatious or uptight they risk the designer's autocratic, bass-voiced censure. Like the proper English movie actress who arrived in an ankle-length tent dress and was informed, "You are not fuckable. You look like a schoolteacher." Or the wife of a celebrated film director who appeared for an appointment fresh from a trip to the beauty salon, to be told, "You look old." Zoran obligingly recut her hair himself, with fabric shears. He says she looked much younger afterward.

"What I do," Zoran tells me in his vacation home in Naples, Florida, a small, all-white 1956 house with few pieces of furniture more than two feet high, "is tell them the truth. Only. I am not Bill Blass saying, 'Oh, darling, you look so marvelous, so fabulous.' " He adds, with a typically self-delighted mixture of earnestness and irony, "I don't care who is coming or who is who. I am always more important than anyone else."

While the forty-five-year-old Zoran has not exactly resisted success, he has doggedly insisted it arrive on his own, very specific terms. On the surface, his career reads like a primer of what to do *not* to make it in fashion: eschew all offers to license perfume and cheaper clothing lines; never dramatically vary your style from season to season ("I will never change, of course; you have to make that one single expression, and that is that"); tell the stores to let you ship when and what you want to; when Bergdorf Goodman creates a boutique for you, show up two hours late for the opening, and only after repeated telephoned pleas; don't return calls from *Vogue*. At Zoran's commercial zenith, in 1983, when he was a steady best-seller at such New York outlets as Saks Fifth Avenue and Bergdorf's, he summarily pulled out of most major stores, partly because he believed they were copying his clothing for their own private labels, "so my image became damaged." It is a moment he remembers with extreme satisfaction. "I made a phone call the same evening for everybody at the same time. They said, 'We do that.' THEY decide. I said, 'Well, is different time. I decide.' And cut off a million-dollar income, which they did not believe, to say just 'Fuck you, because I believe that you're wrong.' "

Still, in the changing cycle of fashion, it seems to be Zoran's moment once again. The time he withdrew from the big retailers coincided with a general move in style toward all-out, wear-your-wealth glitz and costumey postmodernism, the age of Trump and Lacroix. "People were getting rich, believing in it," he says disgustedly. "It was America at the tail end." While he continued to be featured strongly in the European style press, Stateside he went into relative eclipse. Now, with America in a recessionary hangover, Zoran's rigorously discreet, unadorned separates—cut to fit all sizes (his pants and skirts have elasticized waists) in such luxury fabrics as silk and cashmere—look altogether appropriate. He is receiving major spreads in the American fashion magazines he deigns to deal with, and the department stores are again paying court. When Henri Bendel reopened on Fifth Avenue last year amid stupendous fanfare, Zoran was the only designer to receive autonomous space, in part because, suggests store president Susan Falk, "it just all played into what is happening in fashion today." Zoran also draws a steady cult customer at Barneys in New York, Neiman Marcus, and, as of two years ago, I. Magnin, which was one of the stores he had walked out on in 1983, and which reapproached the designer, according to Magnin's David Wright, be-

STYLED BY EVYAN METZNER. HAIR BY STEPHEN KNOLL FOR THE STEPHEN KNOLL SALON. MAKEUP BY ANDREA PAOLETTI FOR PIERRE MICHEL. ALL CLOTHES BY ZORAN

cause of "the mood in the country right now for clean, uncomplicated, and comfortable." Another victim of the Zoran purge of '83, a major store executive in New York, asked me eagerly, "Do you think he'd do it [sell to the store again]? Do you? Do you really?" "The department stores are calling like crazy," Zoran confirmed when I phoned to arrange our initial interview. "We just sit here, drinking our Stoli, and wait. Eventually it comes to you."

Joan Weinstein, owner of the Chicago designer boutique Ultimo, where Zoran is today her top seller, believes his clothes "were of the nineties even in the seventies." Today, she continues, "there are many women who don't want to walk around pinched in, hooked up, breasts out, slashed midriff. . . . The magazines are showing very intricate things. The customers, at least a lot of my customers, are looking for simple." It's easiest to understand Zoran's fashion system if you think of it as a Gap—the massive chain which specializes in endlessly interchangeable sportswear basics—for the very rich. (Zoran's prices range from $200, for a cotton-piqué T-shirt, to $2,500, for a cashmere coat.) Because he's continued with the same essential five shapes with which he launched his first line in 1976, a loyal customer can keep replacing her favorite pieces forever. It helps that his palette—black, gray, white, beige, and the occasional deep red or purple—remains similarly inflexible. "You can't just say overnight, Throw away your black dress, bury your son in orange," he says of the vogue for bright colors. "Elegant is dark. America just learned how to do dark color; it can't just go back now to junky America."

Accordingly, Lauren Hutton has been reordering the same pair of pull-on Zoran gabardine trousers for the past decade. Amanda Burden, a New York City planning commissioner and daughter of the legendarily best-dressed Babe Paley, buys most things in multiples of three and six. Jennifer Bartlett—who did let Zoran go through her closet and give her Saint Laurents to her sister and her daughter's nanny—now wears only Zoran, augmented by mail-order pieces from J. Crew, and emphasizes the practicality of the clothes. "I can go from vertical to horizontal with complete comfort," says the painter. "You know

Lauren Hutton and Isabella Rossellini wearing Zoran. *Opposite*, Zoran as a student in Belgrade: "We were supposed to be all the same, except I was not."

Zoran admires Chanel, Armani, and, above all, the late Madame Mao. "The best designer. She dressed one billion people."

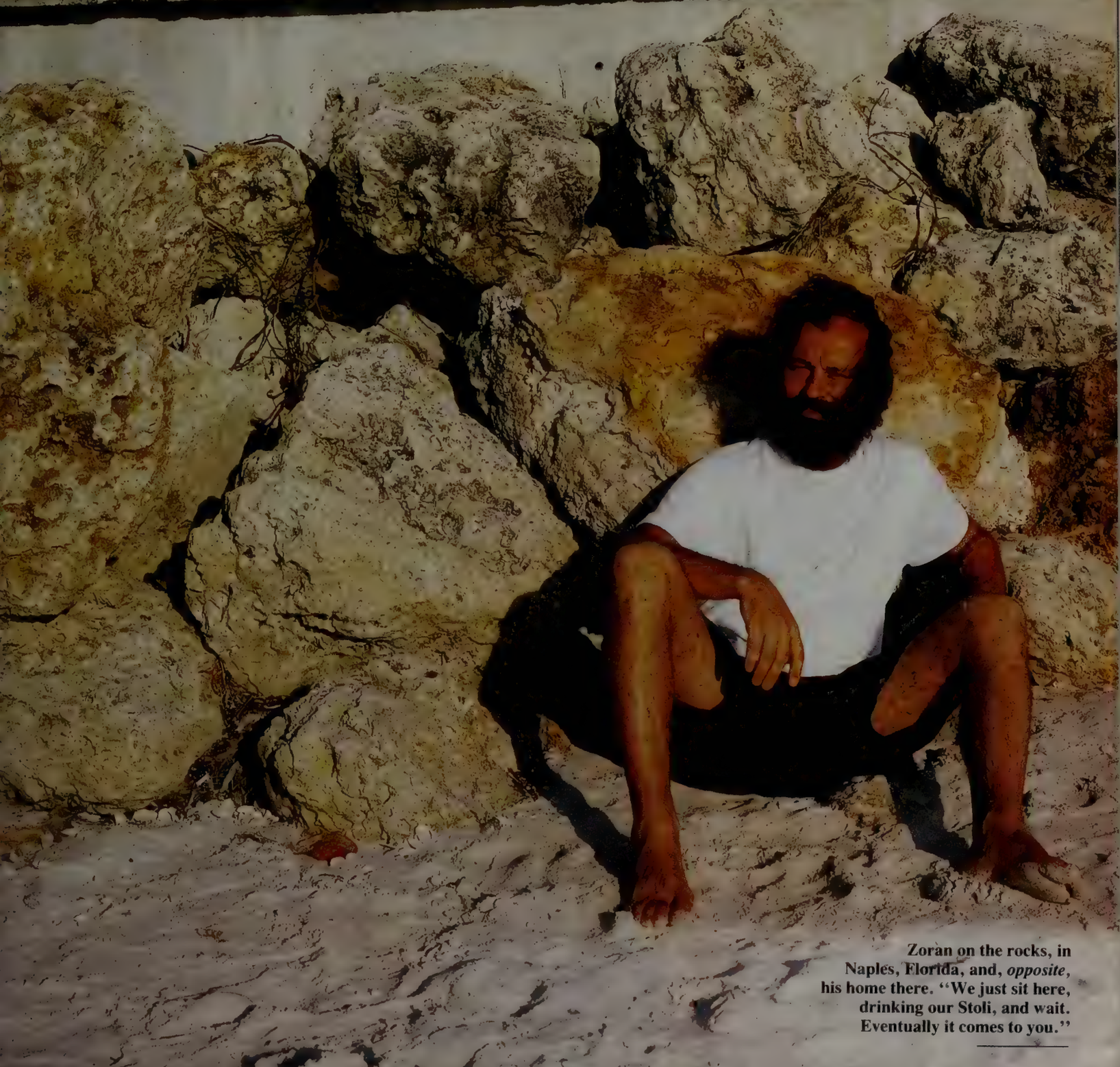
"He's like a Zen monk," says Rossellini. "Imagine being like that, and then choosing to live in the world of fashion."

what a mess I am. Can you imagine me lying on the floor in a Lacroix, with the tulle coming up under my ears and abrasions under the arms?"

With their implicit disdain for frippery, they are also, perhaps, the ultimate snob clothes. In explaining his philosophy of fashion, Zoran cites the Yugoslav adage that a man with only a few coins in his pouch clinks them loudly; the man with a full pouch makes no noise. His own designs are nearly anonymous, and it's no surprise that, throughout the fluctuations of style, he has remained a favorite with the low-profile rich. Flora Biddle, the chairman of the Whitney Museum and a granddaughter of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, who says she usually just buys "what Zoran tells me to buy," adds cautiously, "I don't want to sound pejorative about other people, but Zoran's clothes don't look fancy, as if you're trying to make a big splash. I would love to wear nothing else but."

Others contend that Zoran's clothes are simply too simple, too undesigned. "Furniture covers" and "plain-Jane" fashion was how my old boss John Fairchild, the publisher of *Women's Wear Daily*, dismissed them when I worked at the paper. "They *can* look like Home Ec 101," agrees a veteran fashion editor, who feels the clothes look "dowdy" on older women. "He never bothered to learn a trade." In fact, Zoran cannot cut or sew or properly sketch. "He thinks purely in the abstract," says his thirty-four-year-old business manager, Gary Galleberg, who three years ago left a job as a corporate lawyer on Wall Street to work for the designer. "He thinks a long time about dimensions and the look he wants, and then a lot of time really thinking seriously about what details can be taken away." He then instructs a seamstress to execute the concept. His productivity varies radically. "Sometimes he's very up and outgoing and wants to get things done," says Galleberg. "Other days, he doesn't feel like doing anything." Zoran himself says a workday means "being bored."

But if Zoran works capriciously—often lacing his days with doses of his beloved Stolichnaya vodka—his minimalist aesthetic is unconditionally fixed and permeates every detail of his life. The downtown-Manhattan loft where he holds his surreally casual seasonal shows and the by-appointment ateliers



Zoran on the rocks, in Naples, Florida, and, *opposite*, his home there. "We just sit here, drinking our Stoli, and wait. Eventually it comes to you."

in Washington and Milan are all austerely white—with shin-high tables and gym mats or pillows for seats—and virtually interchangeable. (His most recent selling space, in Milan, is frequented, he says, "only by noble people in flat shoes.") They have wall-less showers, doorless water closets, and white-sheeted futons for napping. Zoran won't say where he actually lives most of the time ("I am a homeless person"), but he owns a considerable amount of personal real estate. There's a building in Manhattan's Tribeca area he's been renovating for years, as well as vacation houses in Middleburg, Virginia, and Naples, Florida, both bastions of the soft-spoken American wealth Zoran says he particularly admires. The Florida place, a modest model of mid-twentieth-century middle-class functionalism, required little more than a ceiling-to-floor coat of white paint by way of refurbishment; the eighteenth-century stone cottage in Virginia, which he bought from Washington heiress Sophie Engelhard, was "too Ritz-Carlton" for his tastes, and for days he worked until three in the morning stripping it of its woodwork, its closets, its Jacuzzi.

Obviously even such austere living on prime real estate requires serious capital. But Zoran steadfastly refuses to divulge any volume estimates. "I'm not going to be Donald Trump," he says. "You never get [financial figures] from me. No, I think it's silly to speak about money."

Born in 1947 in Banat in war-devastated Yugoslavia to a monarchist Serbian bank owner who refused to convert to Communism, Zoran Ladicorbic grew up, he says, with money—but "in the head, not in the hand." The family stables had been dismantled to build state farms, "but some of it was left, so I knew a little bit what it was." He grudgingly delivers this slice of autobiography one afternoon in the industrial-looking space where he stores his clothes and sees his clients. He is videotaping the interview for himself. His three young assistants, all (like the designer himself) in black Zoran, lie around him, like acolytes, at a discreet distance. We are sitting, of course, on mats; we are drinking, of course, vodka. "If I didn't have vodka, I would never speak to you," he says. "Vodka just gives *(Continued on page 218)*

Irish Jig

So somebody waxes ecstatic about this movie called *Hear My Song* (gloppy title). And they say it's charming and sweet (tell it to my dentist). And the stars are mostly unknown, except for Ned Beatty (except for who?). And it's about a concert promoter's search for a famous missing tenor, but mostly it's about young love and the magic of Ireland (I can't go; my turtle's sick). And it's probably the sleeper of the year (I'm snoring already).

So all right, this isn't exactly a movie that sells itself. But *Hear My Song* turns out to be so beguiling that the Princess of Wales is attending a royal premiere of it in London on March 3 to benefit a favorite charity, Turning Point, which combats alcohol, drug, and mental-health problems. No doubt she'll be captivated by the two winsome young things who provide the film's love interest. The one on the left, with all the teeth, is newcomer Tara Fitzgerald; the one on the right is Adrian Dunbar, who not only plays the wheedling concert promoter but also co-wrote the anarchic screenplay with first-time director Peter Chelsom. *Hear My Song* is funny, yet it has a lyrical, timeless quality, and Dunbar thinks he knows why. "Anarchy doesn't date," he explains. (Maybe that's because no one will go out with it.)

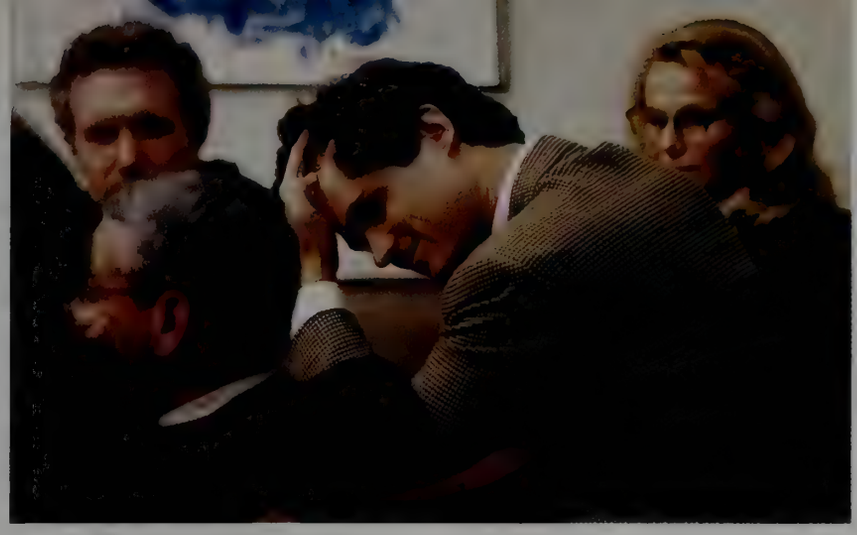
—STEPHEN SCHIFF

STYLED BY ANNA COCKBURN; HAIR BY KEVIN RYAN FOR SATELLITE; MAKEUP BY LESLEY CHILKES FOR MARINA JONES; SHIRTS BY KATHARINE HAMNETT

TARA FITZGERALD AND ADRIAN DUNBAR

Hear My Song is funny, yet it has a lyrical, timeless quality.

Photograph by NICK KNIGHT



LANNIS WATERS

DARK VICTORY Willie Smith, *right,* smiled with relief when he heard the verdict. Patricia Bowman, *left,* with her small daughter, felt so wronged she decided to abandon her anonymity.

THE VERDICT

Patricia Bowman and the Florida state prosecutors may have been blown away by the Kennedys' pageant of piety in Palm Beach. But as DOMINICK DUNNE discovers in conversations with her mother and stepfather— patriarch of the other Irish Catholic family in the drama— and in an exclusive print interview with Bowman at her home in Jupiter, Florida, William Smith's victory has not left her in defeat

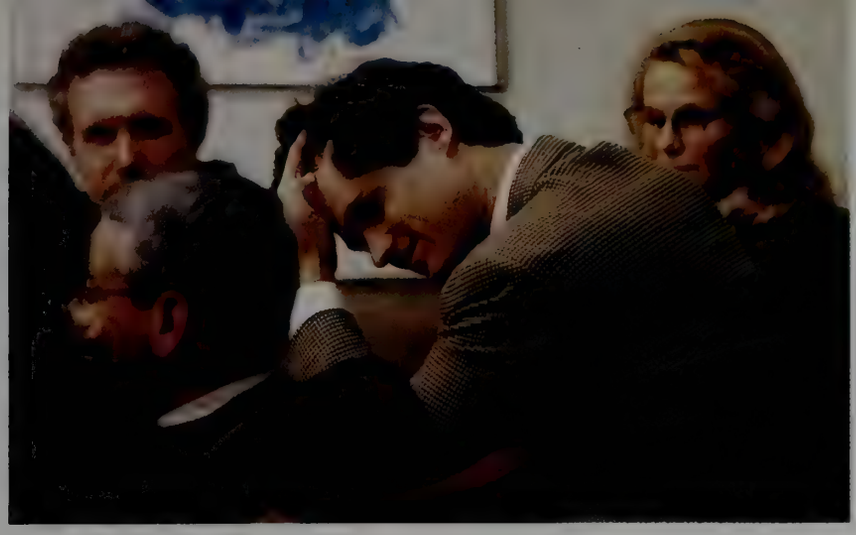
"One of the most asked questions about you is, What was she doing in a bar at three o'clock in the morning?"

"Yes, I was out late with friends, but so was he. The issue of what I was doing out at three in the morning has nothing to do with what happened to me from that man."

Dr. William Kennedy Smith's rape trial so enthralled the country that the news of his acquittal was even flashed on the message screen at Hollywood Park racetrack, for those engaged in pursuits other than watching Court TV or CNN that Wednesday afternoon in early December. Along with the Persian Gulf War, the Supreme Court confirmation hearings of Clarence Thomas, the Soviet coup, and the resignation of Mikhail Gorbachev, Smith's trial was one of last year's most watched television events. Intimates of Smith's family said that the Kennedys were never in doubt about the outcome of the trial. From the first day, there was private talk in their midst of the victory party that would follow the acquittal. And so it came to pass.

From the beginning, the accuser was of considerably less interest than the accused. Had the tabloid newspaper *The Globe* and *The New York Times* not published her name, Patricia Bowman, as she is called, would have been totally unknown, no more than a bit player in this movie-

Photographs by ANNIE LEIBOVITZ



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Photographs by ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

UNITED THEY STAND: The Kennedy women came in relays to the courthouse: Willie with Eunice Shriver—addressing the throng—Ethel Kennedy, and Jean Smith.

of-the-week date-rape story, until her appearance on the witness stand in West Palm Beach, Florida, where, from behind the dot that shielded her face, she pointed her finger at the accused and said to his lawyer, "Your client raped me." It was Smith who commanded the attention, William Kennedy Smith, Willie Smith, or Will Smith, as his lawyer renamed him for the trial, the grandson of the late ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy and his wife, Rose, the nephew of Senator Edward Moore Kennedy, the nephew of the slain president of the United States John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the nephew of the slain former attorney general of the United States Robert Francis Kennedy, the cousin of Assistant District Attorney John Fitzgerald Kennedy Jr., the cousin of Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg, the cousin of Congressman Joseph P. Kennedy II, the cousin of Rhode Island state representative Patrick Joseph Kennedy, the cousin of Maria Shriver, and the cousin of some twenty-five others of varying degrees of celebrity and recognizability. By comparison, Patricia Bowman, despite being the stepdaughter of the former chairman of the board of General Tire & Rubber Co. in Akron, Ohio, was a virtual nonentity.

The verdict, not guilty, was a disappointment to some, a cause for delirium to others, but a surprise to no one. From the moment on the first day of the trial when Judge Mary Lupo disallowed, without comment, the testimony of three other women—a doctor, a medical student, and a law student who at the time was the girlfriend of Smith's cousin Matthew Maxwell Kennedy—who claimed they were sexually assaulted by Smith between 1983 and 1988, the die was cast. Only the speed with which the jury of six people selected to decide Smith's fate arrived at their decision was a surprise: a mere seventy-seven minutes, including the time it took to pick a foreman. They had asked for no testimony to be read back, no evidence to ponder; they had no questions for Judge Lupo. Nor did they feel any constraints of propriety to sit around for three hours, or perhaps even overnight, to make their decision seem more carefully arrived at. Only reasonable doubt had to be shown, and it had been.

Like the retired armchair generals of the Gulf War, lawyers across the land went on television each night to rate the performances of the defense and the prosecution in Courtroom 411. Many were irate at the proceedings, saying that if a Kennedy were not involved and the alleged rape had not taken place in such a gilded arena as Palm Beach the case would not have attracted the international attention that it did, as if that were a brilliant or original argument. Of course the case would not have attracted such attention if a Kennedy had not been involved. But a Kennedy *was* involved, and the Kennedys are America's most famous theatrical family and have been for half a century. They have outdone the Greeks for tragedy. They have outdone Hollywood for scandal. Love them, hate them, they are bigger than life, and they know instinctively how to play each scene in their continuing, mesmerizing saga. Once the Kennedy family's arrival and departure habits at the Palm Beach County Courthouse in West Palm Beach became known during the trial, the crowds got larger each day to stare at the family members and cheer them. Even Judge Lupo was not immune to the Kennedy charisma. She was photographed greeting Sargent Shriver in her courtroom after having been introduced to him by Smith's attorney Roy Black.

The fascinating picture of a famous family fighting for its life, and winning, with almost every member of it behind the young doctor who had brought them to the brink of disaster, was a spectacle more riveting than much of the trial itself. They gave an unprecedented display of solidarity combined with stardom, waving at the press, smiling at the photographers, any one of them capable at any moment of stepping in front of the bank of microphones and addressing the multitudes. "We are a very close family," all of them said over and over again. And they are. Or appeared to be, judging by the parade of loyal relations who came in and went out of the courtroom. When I remarked on this closeness to a Palm Beach person who has had warm connections with the family for more than thirty years, the reply was "They'll stick by Willie through thick and thin, but when this is over, and they're alone, they'll beat the shit out of him."

In the smart circles of the community, there were snorts of derision every time the Kennedys were referred to as America's royal family. And yet, for many people, they *are* America's royal family, despite Chappaquiddick, despite their flaws, despite their abuses of power, despite their marital infidelities. The Kennedy women, the aunts of the man on trial, with their family sorrows

On the stand, the senator reversed the dynamic from a night of debauchery to one of sorrowing for dead relations.

wrinkled into faces that have taken too much Palm Beach and Hyannis sun over the years, came in relays to the courtroom, heads held high. They had been through worse events than this. Several times. Like dowager archduchesses of a royal house, believing in the divine right of kings, or Kennedys, they sat unblinking as the prosecution co-counsel, Ellen Roberts, gave graphic descriptions of chilling acts of brutality, meant to show a pattern in their nephew's behavior, in her plea to Judge Lupo to allow the inclusion of the testimony of the three women besides the accuser who claimed to have been sexually assaulted by Smith. One morning Eunice Kennedy Shriver, seventy, holding the sweaters and shawls she brought to the courthouse because of the excessive air-conditioning, walked up to the microphones, unasked, with Willie, her nephew, on one side of her, Jean, her sister, on the other, and Ethel, her sister-in-law, behind her. She began speaking in a voice eerily reminiscent of that of the late President Kennedy, saying that the family was there to support her sister Jean. She told of how wonderfully Jean had brought up her four children, and detailed the educational and career history of each, including Willie, whom she called William, the doctor. She referred to the event that brought them there as "this sad trial," as if it were no more than a nuisance in their lives. She said that thirty of William's relatives would be coming to the community to give family support, and then, imperially, she ended her speech with a greeting to the assembled throng: "I wish you a happy Christmas and a gift of loyal family relationships."

Actually, only nineteen family members came into the courtroom. Among those were Smith's brother, Stephen junior, and his two adopted sisters, Amanda and Kym, a Vietnamese; Ethel Kennedy, Robert's widow, and two of her sons, Robert junior and Michael; Sargent Shriver, the husband of Eunice, and one of his sons; Patricia Lawford and three of the four Lawford children; John Kennedy Jr., the star of the new generation, who, although he was reported as saying his appearance at the trial was a reluctant one, brought about by family pressure, later denied this. There was much speculation about whether the former First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis would arrive to do *her* stint. At a Palm Beach dinner party that I attended during the trial, two society ladies were discussing the case that so obsessed the community. One was a childhood friend of Mrs. Onassis's. "They'll never get Jackie here at this trial," she said knowingly. The "they" she was referring to were the Kennedy family. Mrs. Onassis never appeared. Nor did her daughter, Caroline.

Most of the family members were billeted in various private houses in Palm Beach. Only the Smiths and Senator Kennedy, when he arrived for his forty-five-minute appearance on the stand, stayed at the compound. The rest of the mansion was occupied by Smith's lawyers and his public-relations spokeswoman, Barbara Gamarekian, who had formerly been with *The New York Times;* it was used as a sort of command center throughout. One Palm Beach hostess, with whom several members of the family were staying, was told, "Don't worry about us for dinner. We have a strategy session every night at dinner at the compound."

They were a family on their best behavior. They did nothing to appear too rich. There were no limousines, no chauffeurs. Evoking the common touch, the immediate family arrived each day in a battered 1989 Mercury station wagon, usually driven by Bridey Sullivan, the Smiths' longtime housekeeper. Other members used nondescript rented cars, with everyone piling in and making room at the end of the day, just like folks. No one wore smart Palm Beachy clothes. However they spent their evenings, they spent them in private. They created no talk. They were not sighted at a single Palm Beach party. Or restaurant. And certainly no bar or night spot. A person who watched the trial on television with one of Smith's aunts on a day when she wasn't in court told me the aunt said, "I must tell the Professor [Roy Black] not to keep saying 'the Kennedy estate.' It doesn't sound right. He should say 'the Kennedy *house*.' "

Other than at the courthouse, the family's only public appearances were at St. Edward's Roman Catholic Church, where a phalanx of photographers waited outside each Mass to catch them arriving or leaving. Smith himself was photographed kneeling at prayer. The Catholic Church assumed an uneasy role in the proceedings, with the juxtaposition of early Mass and Communion followed on some days by graphic sexual testimony in the courtroom, in which words such as "penis," "vagina," "erection," "semi-erection," "ejaculation," and "semen" were listened to with equanimity by the communicants, as if there were no inconsistency. The single refinement, in the name of good taste, came from Smith himself. He said his accuser had "massaged" him to ejaculation, sparing the courtroom and his family the words "jerked off." When a Roman-collared Jesuit seminarian who had earlier attended Mass with Smith and his mother accompanied the family to court for the closing arguments, he was strategically seated behind Smith and in full view of the jury. A reporter next to me whispered in my ear, "My God, I bet they wheel in Rose next," referring to 101-year-old Rose Kennedy, Smith's grandmother, who is in retirement in Hyannis.

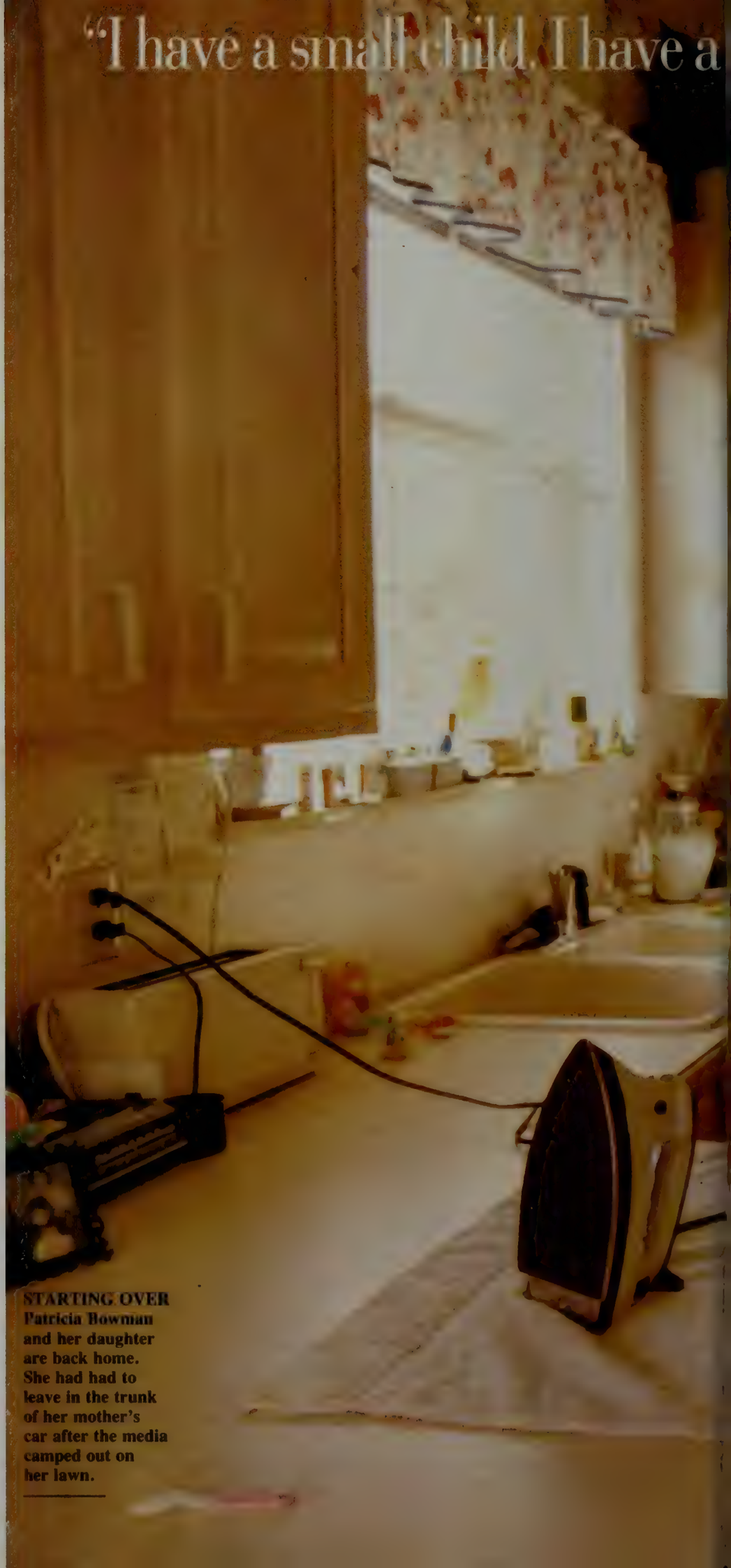
Only occasionally were old-time signs of superiority manifested. When the tape recorder of David Margolick, the reporter from *The New York Times*, went off accidentally in his pocket and began playing, creating a momentary confusion, Eunice Shriver turned around and pointed Margolick out to the bailiff, causing the reporter to be evicted from the courtroom. On the day that Willie Smith was to testify, Robert Kennedy Jr., an environmental lawyer who was there with his brother Michael, was dissatisfied with his seat. The courtroom was very small. There were sixteen seats for the public and sixteen seats for the media. The Kennedy family had three seats allotted to them, as did the family and friends of Patricia

THE OTHER FAMILY: Jean and Jerry O'Neil, Patricia Bowman's mother and stepfather, who has thirteen other children.

PHOTOGRAPHS: LEFT, BY STEVE STARR; RIGHT, BY DOUG McGLOTHLIN

Bowman. Kennedy wanted to sit on the aisle, but a man and a woman were already sitting in the two aisle seats. He went over and asked them to change places. They refused. Rebuffed, he returned to his seat and glared at them. He then rose, passed the couple, and went to the bailiff in the rear of the courtroom to ask him to ask the people to move so that he and his brother could sit there. The bailiff said the seating was first come, first served. Still not ready to give up, Kennedy went back to the couple and said, "We'd really like to sit here while Will is on the stand." The woman replied, "We would have liked to sit in these seats when Patty was testifying." "You don't understand, we're family," said Kennedy, as if that would make them scramble. "No, *you* don't understand, *I'm* family," replied the man, who turned out to be Shawn O'Neil, one of Patricia Bowman's stepbrothers, who was sitting with Anne Seymour of the National Victim Center.

It is a fact of the judicial system that rarely are the prosecutors from the district attorney's offices around the country a match for the defense attorneys rich defendants such as William Kennedy Smith can hire. And so it was in Palm Beach. Assistant State Attorney of Palm Beach County Moira Lasch, the prosecutor, forty, was considered the star in her office, with a nearly 100 percent track record for convictions. In 1987 she was named prosecutor of the year. Smith's lawyer, the highly regarded Roy Black, forty-six, known in Miami legal circles as "the Professor," was perhaps hitherto best known for winning the acquittal of the Hispanic police officer who had sparked the 1989 Miami race riots by shooting a black motorcyclist. He has successfully defended murderers and drug traffickers. In another Miami case, he defended a young mother charged with drowning her three-year-old son, and succeeded in keeping from the jury the fact that the child's sibling had also drowned in a sink. Two other defense attorneys had preceded Black on this case: Herbert "Jack" Miller of Washington, D.C., who had been Senator Edward Kennedy's lawyer in the Chappaquiddick affair in 1969 and who was replaced after the prosecution likened his strategies to those *(Continued on page 233)*



STARTING OVER Patricia Bowman and her daughter are back home. She had had to leave in the trunk of her mother's car after the media camped out on her lawn.

beautiful, full life. They haven't destroyed me."

SWEET YOUNG THINGS

A pick of the best of the great white dessert wines

BY JOEL L. FLEISHMAN

Though most sippers reserve sweet white wines for dessert, as a luxurious way to sweep the palate clean and lull the appetite to sleep, wine lovers with a sweet tooth lace them through their entire meal. As aperitifs, they can be served with salted almonds or hot, crisp, rosemaried pecan halves. A dazzling culinary sensation is a sweet white wine matched with an appetizer of foie gras, either sautéed or as pâté. In France, sweet whites are prized as main-course accompaniments to turbot with sauce mousseline, roast chicken with garlic, duck à l'orange, chicken livers, and even grilled veal chops.

But it is as dessert wines that sweet white wines are best known and most passionately loved. Because they lack the alcoholic wallop of cognac or even of port (which, though sweet, is still 20 percent alcohol), they are much kinder to human heads the morning after. With rarely more than 14 percent alcohol, and frequently less, they are hardly intoxicating on a full stomach, and their sweetness naturally discourages excess.

Sweet white wines can be squeezed out of every kind of white grape, but the choicest are made from Sauvignon Blanc, Sémillon, Pinot Gris, Gewürztraminer, and Riesling. By leaving the grapes on the vine to ripen beyond the stage of 22 to 23 percent sugar suitable for dry wines, winemakers pack their grapes with levels as high as 50 percent, though they more commonly hover around 35 percent. Before the harvest, château owners pray their vineyards will be infected by a fungus called *Botrytis cinerea,* referred to in France as "noble rot," which shrivels the grapes, causing the moisture to evaporate through the weakened skin and concentrating the sweetness of the fruit inside. This condition, essential for the finest sweet white wines, occurs regularly in only a few select regions.

White dessert wines are produced in all parts of the world, though the most magnificent come from Germany, Australia, California, Alsace, and several other regions of France. Still, though California has caught up with France in making world-class red and dry white wines, its progress in sweet whites lags behind. Most young sweet white wines from California taste smooth, voluptuous, and sometimes complex, but they frequently age into a golden, caramely nectar too much like honey to be the refreshing finale to a meal. The reason, it seems, is that the climate is simply too warm: as the California sun shines down, the heat juices up the sugar levels and suppresses the acidity that is crucial to balancing the flavor of aging sweet wines.

The only truly great sweet whites, the ones which age into a beautiful burnished gold with a greenish edge, are produced in consistently cooler climates, principally in Germany and France. Of these, the most exquisitely balanced, to my taste, are produced in France's Sauternes and Barsac regions, two neighboring communes that lie just south of Bordeaux. The fog that rises off the Garonne River and other nearby bodies of water dampens the air and filters the sun, conjuring up the perfect atmosphere for the indispensable botrytis.

Happily, the fungus has spread like wildfire through these two communes recently, nurturing three—and possibly four—great vintages in the last five years. Nineteen eighty-eight was for Bordeaux's sweet whites as superb a year as 1961 and 1982 were for the regal Bordeaux reds. Nineteen eighty-six and 1989 were outstanding, and for some châteaux 1990 seems likely to be nearly as impressive. All of these vintages are currently available, either on the shelves or as futures, creating the kind of extraordinary buying opportunity that comes around only once a decade. Each year's bottles taste gorgeous now, but fifteen years' patience will be rewarded with an ambrosia of Olympian proportions.

Here are my recommendations (favorites are marked with asterisks).

1986: Doisy-Dubroca ($20); *Rayne Vigneau ($23); Doisy-Daëne, Rabaud-Promis ($24); *Sigalas-Rabaud ($25); Doisy-Védrines ($29); *Guiraud ($30); *Lafaurie-Peyraguey ($37); *Rieussec ($40); *Climens ($48); *Raymond-Lafon ($66); *D'Yquem ($216).

1988: Doisy-Daëne ($25); **La Tour Blanche, a dazzling blend of citrus and pineapple flavors with a backbone of crisp acids ($27); **Rayne Vigneau, honeyed sweetness sharpened by a tropical tang ($31); *Rabaud-Promis ($32); Doisy-Dubroca, *Lafaurie-Peyraguey ($35); *Guiraud, **Coutet, majestically rich ($37); *Sigalas-Rabaud, Suduiraut ($41); *Climens ($45); *Rieussec ($46); *Raymond-Lafon ($53).

1989: *Coutet ($30); *Guiraud ($31); **La Tour Blanche, astonishingly rich and perfectly proportioned, with lush apricot, orange, and lemon flavors ($33); Caillou, *Doisy-Daëne ($35); *Climens ($37); Doisy-Védrines ($38); *Lamothe-Guignard, Rabaud-Promis ($42); *Lafaurie-Peyraguey ($45); Sigalas-Rabaud, *Suduiraut ($47); *Rieussec ($48); *Raymond-Lafon ($52). □

TIM SHEAFFER

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cashmere

Zoran Zeitgeist

(Continued from page 208) you energy. That's the only thing I admire from my father. He drank until the day he died."

This is one of the few details Zoran will provide about his parents. "There's nothing from family—no, no, no," he says gruffly. "I can never. . . blame the mother or the father, go to psychiatrist. There's nothing there. They died years ago. That's the best thing from parents, they died on time." Predictably, he describes himself in childhood as "the worst. In every way. Difficult. Teachers, they were not able to handle it, because we were supposed to be all the same, except I was not the same." He traveled widely, studied architecture at the university in Belgrade, and, in 1971, came to America to visit his older sister, who had married an expatriate Yugoslav and was living in Huntington, Long Island.

His sister had plans for Zoran. "She wanted me to stay in Long Island and start buying house and be provincial person—Doris Day and Barbie and Ken. Everybody had the same wallpaper and the same gold-and-green bathrooms. That's how America was." He soon quarreled with her and moved to Manhattan, which impressed him more. "If you come from very old, you will like to live new and young," he says. He became enamored with the modernist America of Philip Johnson, with the skyscrapers and the subways, but couldn't understand why the people on the streets were "dressing in all the colors. . . there was no subtlety." When a man he met drinking at the Candy Store, a trendy club on Fifty-sixth Street, offered him a job there checking coats, he decided to stay. He went on to work as a salesman at the Pierre Balmain boutique on Madison Avenue, and subsequently, after meeting American designer Scott Barrie at a nightclub in Paris, he helped create accessories for Barrie, with whom he also shared an apartment. After a stint selling—and, according to Zoran, designing—for the fast-rising fashion star Julio, he began his own collection in 1976, urged on by a young buyer from Henri Bendel named Marion Greenberg, who discerned a particular, cultivatable talent in the moody Yugoslav.

Those who remember Zoran from that time recall him as elegant, supercilious, and extremely handsome—clean-shaven then, and dressed in simple, expensive shirts and slacks. Barrie, who describes Zoran as "everyone's delight and everyone's problem," recalls him as someone "who hadn't found anything to focus on. He was always of the opinion 'Oh, why are you working so hard? Just do this, just do that, and forget about it.' " Zoran, who describes one's twenties as a period of "education, when you're sponging all the time," speaks fondly of "those days, when you had friends that had penthouses and terraces. Great life. Night scene exciting. All night long." But he says he "hated being called beautiful." He adds, "That was the problem then, because if you looked good, everybody was after you, but you have to say no." He started wearing fedoras because "I just didn't want to be that young vulnerable person." And by the late seventies he had found the more satisfactory camouflage of the thicketlike, Rasputinish beard he still sports today.

When Zoran began showing his own line, from an apartment on the Upper East Side, many fashion observers saw it as an evolution of the pared-down principles Halston had been formulating. "There is no influence," answers Zoran. "Everything is mine." But in the eternally recycling world of fashion, the claim of originality is always debatable. Scott Barrie, for example, thinks Zoran was inspired by a group of relaxed crêpe de Chine separates he did, "so you might say the formula came from Scott." (Zoran says he doesn't remember Barrie's ever doing crêpe de Chine, "only matte jersey.") And Marion Greenberg, the retailer who brought Zoran to Bendel's, says that the original concept of five easy pieces was developed by her and Zoran in tandem and that in 1975 they established, by oral agreement, a partnership, which the designer had totally disavowed by 1981. In a suit she filed against Zoran two years later, which has yet to come to trial, she claimed, among other things, that she invested capital in the business, arranged for the importation of many of the fabrics Zoran would use, and personally brought him to the attention of many fashion merchandisers and journalists.

"Then why didn't she do it [create the collection] herself?" says Zoran when I bring up the subject of the lawsuit. "I think you should disregard Marion. . . . We were friends. It was great, of course, that she bought the collection." But he claims her contribution was little more than that, and says many of the innovations she pushed for—such as the use of brighter colors—didn't suit him. "You cannot listen to anyone in design, in your idea. Ninety-nine percent of comments, advice, which come from other people is thrown out. You might keep 1 percent. But that 1 percent is not important. And Marion had that 1 percent."

Anyway, Zoran notes conclusively, "I'm still here." It's true that his stature today rests less on the original idea—nearly every designer, after all, has flirted at some point with minimalism—than on his unswerving adherence to it and his ability to sustain a loyal clientele. When he moved downtown to Sullivan Street in 1979, his uptown customers followed him in their limousines. Some of the clothes he made then—and many, many duplicates of them—remain on the racks in his loft, still ready for sale. Isabella Rossellini thinks Zoran's great talent is simply "resisting" change. "It's a fight, like a Zen monk," she says. "And he has to work every day at it, not to fall into temptation. Imagine being like that, and then choosing to live in the world of fashion, which is opulence, superfluousness, frivolity." Correspondingly, the only other designers Zoran admits to admiring are those who have similarly stuck to one essential concept: Coco Chanel, Giorgio Armani, and, above all, Jiang Qing, the late widow of Mao Zedong: "The best designer. She dressed one billion people. Better than Gap. If you ever see her on television when she was on trial, she had the best attitude. The most elegant."

If Zoran's designs have seldom changed, the people who surround him certainly have. Though he's never employed a staff of more than 20 worldwide, he estimates that 110 people have worked for him in his fifteen years of business. "T-shirt is still here," he says. "But people are not." This is partly because he largely hires only the very young—a long succession of uniformly comely men and women with willowy bodies and clean jawlines—partly because until the advent of Gary Galleberg, who now manages much of the business side, Zoran refused to delegate important responsibilities. "Business," as he says, "is me." But those who have done time on Sullivan Street often talk about how much fun it all was, in spite of the designer's extreme mood swings. "It's like pre-school," says former Zoran assistant Connie Francis. "Anyone who works there does everything from sweeping the floor to having lunch with Candice Bergen."

Zoran, too, speaks sentimentally of the good times he had with his staff in the early eighties: refusing to pay a young architect he'd hired for renovations (he was mad at him because he couldn't find the right toilet) until he caught a grape in his mouth that Zoran dropped from the sixth-floor loft to the street; or having so much fun "dancing and drinking" with his assistants one day that when Dawn Mello, then the president of Bergdorf's, arrived for a scheduled

appointment he wouldn't let her in.

Zoran began discussions last year with some of the stores he had spurned eight years earlier. This was because he had just ordered a particularly expensive shipment of cashmere, he explained, with grave facetiousness, at the time. But his attitude in these business dealings remained offhandedly imperious, and they never came to anything. For example, at an Italian restaurant in Greenwich Village, he turned to Gary Galleberg to ask him what time the team from Bergdorf's would be coming to his loft that day. Three o'clock, Galleberg answered. "What time is it now?" Zoran asked. Three-fifteen, he was told. The designer raised his glass. "More drinks," he called to the waiter. And when he bought his first answering machine, around the same time, he had an assistant record the greeting "Yes! This is Zoran. If you're important, leave a message."

Still, most of the retailers I talked to, while admitting business with Zoran has to be done "on an exception basis," praised his consistency in quality and delivery. Furthermore, most of them seem to like him. Barneys vice-president Gene Pressman—whose store, in recent years, was the only large New York retailing outlet for Zoran until, without alerting Pressman, the designer opened at Bendel's last February—describes him as "an incredible mix of people. He can be incredibly kind and extremely difficult. He's very bright, very wise, supportive, and he's crazed."

Though some of Zoran's acquaintances complain of his penchant for rambling, didactic monologues, they also speak of how oddly reassuring it is to know someone so dogmatic, a man who will tell you unconditionally how you should be living your life. "He's like a beacon, really," says Flora Biddle, "in a city that's often befogged with many, many choices." Lauren Hutton remembers that once when she was going to an Academy Awards presentation she showed Zoran the bouffant red taffeta dress she planned to wear. "Ugh!" said Zoran, and threw at her a pair of gold-lamé shorts and a matching top. She wore them and received extraordinary publicity. In the days I spent with the designer, he was forever dispensing advice—telling Jennifer Bartlett, who had just moved into a four-story town house, to "stop buying things" and half-seriously suggesting she condense her living space to one floor; counseling a Washington client, who complained about how ghastly she looked in her bedroom mirror in the mornings, "Do bedroom all in white. Then you will look nice." He would even call me with ideas for magazine stories, and whimsically suggested we start our own paper, to be titled *Zoran Speaks—LOUD*. Rossellini describes going out to dinner with the designer: "He complains about everybody in the restaurant and most people who are not in the restaurant. And we all make sure we're wearing only things from Zoran."

In spite of the many clients he's established personal relationships with, Zoran says, "I can't take anyone in large doses. No, I can't be attached to anything." He has never, he says, been in love. "Love to me is very primitive. 'I love that table, I love this chair, I love a lot of things.' You can't love so much. And the same thing with humans. First, love to me is attached to trust. I can't trust anyone but myself."

Zoran's principal form of entertainment is, he says, conversation. He doesn't read books, watch television, or go to the movies. He did recently see *The Fountainhead*—the film adapted from Ayn Rand's novel about an uncompromising superman of an architect—because a friend had told him, "You ARE Fountainhead." Of course, he agreed with her. He also no longer frequents the wild after-hours clubs at which he was a fixture a decade ago. New York, he says, is "too uptight" these days for that sort of thing.

When he wants to unwind, he goes to Naples, on Florida's west coast—an antiseptically clean, meticulously groomed resort town with a strong flavor, he believes, of the Midwest. "The best part of the country," he says. "That is the real America. Pure." Standing at a beachside bar watching the sun go down ("the big action here")—the only man with a beard and the only person in black and white amid a crowd of lurid pastels—he sighs. "Look how great!" he says, watching a trio of teenage girls form a pyramid on the beach for a photograph. "I fell in love with these people. Good stock."

As we drive through the community, he points out how self-effacing most of the houses are, even in the wealthiest sections; how manicured the foliage is along the public roads ("Look how clean! They cut bush once a month, like haircut"); how nearly everyone, regardless of age or gender, is wearing shorts with sandals or sneakers. "You see how people are into uniform," he says. "In all-American places, it's not fashionable to wear silly clothes." When in Naples, he shops for clothes at the local Wal-Mart and at Marshalls, a discount emporium, and the exercise shorts and T-shirts he buys there hang in his closet, side by side with—and nearly indistinguishable from—his own designs.

Not long ago, Zoran made his seasonal personal appearance at his boutique in Washington, D.C. Most of the women—lawyers, public-relations managers, lobbyists, political wives, an architect, a television newscaster—who filed in for the buffet luncheon were wearing boxy, bright-colored jackets, bristling with shoulder pads and big buttons. A trifle self-consciously, they stepped out of their workaday armor and into Zoran's shells of sarongs, sheaths, pants, cardigans, and coats. They began to look, strangely, both softer and more formidable and seemed to have shed any trace of regional or professional identity. As Zoran noted contentedly, surveying the group in their newly donned, habitlike clothes in the blank white room, we could have been almost anywhere, at any time. Soon the women were preening tentatively before the mirrors and writing checks. (Zoran doesn't take credit cards.)

The designer himself, sipping a series of vodkas on the rocks ("It's O.K., if it's not before nine"), was in buoyant form, gleefully barking a running dictatorial commentary: "That coat is GREAT. You've got the best coat. With that shirt doesn't work, but coat is great." "Here, all in white, PERFECT." "NO," he said firmly to a round woman hopefully holding up a scanty white charmeuse top. "NO," to a tall woman in a straight skirt. "The SARONG." (When Zoran introduced his sarong in Washington in 1983, he explained to a doubting client that it was very easy to wear; he'd tested it himself for a year.) "Anne, you've got to give up on that blue jacket," he called out to Anne Jordan, wife of civil-rights lawyer Vernon Jordan, who had arrived in a tailored jacket and was trying on a long cashmere cardigan. "THIS is the way you should dress." To me, he said, "See how much younger they all look? Before, she looked so uptight—like policeman."

He seemed happy that afternoon, although occasionally nettled, as always, by people he felt missed the point of it all. When a woman walked by in his moss-colored coat with shorts, an onlooker commented, "It's like *Two Gentlemen of Verona*." "Or medieval," said another. Zoran rolled his eyes in exasperation. "They read too many books," he grumbled. When someone else complimented him on the "sophistication" of the clothes, he was quick to correct her.

"It's NOT sophisticated," he roared, making what for him is a crucial distinction. "It's normal." □

Solid Goldie

(Continued from page 172) crack-up; she's just like me."

Despite her affinity for George Bush, Hawn is quite liberal politically, while Russell resides at the other extreme (Meryl Streep, who starred opposite him in *Silkwood*, observed then that he was somewhere to the right of Genghis Khan). But when it comes to sexual politics, they are philosophically compatible. In a recent *GQ* cover story, Russell explained his own rather...*basic* point of view thusly: "Why are people attracted to each other? Because they can make a *good baby*. It's instinct.... All our lives are based on human and animal instinct. It all comes down to strength.... The male knows what the male should do. The female knows what the female should do."

Hawn echoes Russell's sentiment. "We still make love to have babies," she says now. "There's nothing bigger than having a child. There's nothing more important than procreating. That's what we're put here for. That's all that matters."

Of the two, Russell apparently has the surer grasp of the mechanics involved: "We really wanted a baby and were trying for about eight months. Goldie said 'I think I'm pregnant' about seven times. Finally I said, 'Let's try to do it right. What's the timing here?' I figured out her days and, *bang*, she got pregnant." The birth of Wyatt, five and a half years ago, seems to have cemented the family unit. "He made us a group," says Russell, who has another son, Boston, from a previous marriage.

"My personal life has always been the most important thing to me," Hawn says. "When that didn't go well, I was not happy. Work was not a solace for me. But I became a movie star and the men in my life couldn't handle it. What was I going to do? I couldn't be someone that I'm not. A man has such a strong need to succeed and to provide—it's one of the most fundamental aspects of the animal. I don't care how smart he is or how aware he is of a woman's place, men are threatened by a woman who is independent. And the more she grows, the worse it gets."

Russell has proved the exception—he's resolutely uncompetitive with Hawn, and claims to be fairly immune from jealousy even when she's doing love scenes with the likes of Mel Gibson. "I can get jealous, but I don't see why Goldie would be with anyone other than me," he explains. "I'm such a horse's ass when it comes to confidence in myself—I haven't met the guy she would like more. Still, we do look at each other and say, 'Both of us are capable of blowing it tonight.' We're human, but we also know we're lucky to have found each other."

It wasn't always so simple. Hawn's four-year marriage to former dancer and director Gus Trikonis ended in divorce in 1973, and her 1976 marriage to musician Bill Hudson ("I met him on an airplane—he was so charming") also lasted four years. A few years ago, Hudson aired his grievances regarding Hawn in the press—"a cold-eyed shark" was one of his better digs. Hawn claims he makes no effort to see his two children from the marriage; Hudson's lawyer counters that he has "an open-door" attitude toward them. "I regret that I didn't spend more time getting to know the father of Oliver and Katie," Hawn says. "We got pregnant with Oliver—consciously—right away." (She was eight months pregnant when they married.)

With Russell—they are still, eight years later, blissfully unmarried—Hawn proceeded more carefully. When *Swing Shift* wrapped, he was slated to go to Italy to film his next project, *Ladyhawke*. "I said, 'You know, honey, we're up for grabs,' " Hawn recalls, looking somewhat misty. " 'I'm going to be here and I love you, but life doesn't stop. We haven't solidified our romance to know it will last.' "

Russell was gone just a week—there were problems with the picture and he quit, racing home to Hawn. "I came into the hotel where she was staying and she wasn't there," he recalls. "I left her a note: 'Take your clothes off. I'm in the next room.' " "It was so fun," Hawn says, giggling at the memory. "And nothing has changed."

"I love knitting," Goldie is saying. "It makes me feel so centered. Simple—like I have a simpler life. I can kind of dream." Hawn has been knitting since she was a dancer, which means since she was a child. Her mother, who ran a dancing school, and her father, who was a violinist, immediately saw Goldie's potential. "Father had the philosophy, but my mother made the demands," Hawn recalls. " 'You are going to dancing school, you do not have a choice, I make the decisions.' She thought I had talent and she was not going to let it go. So I had no choice. I've danced since I was three. I went *en pointe* at ten. There's one story that tells a lot about my character: I was ten or eleven and I performed at a Bar Mitzvah. I did a parasol dance *en pointe*. I put the record on and I walked out with my parasol and my point shoes, and I had to do piqué turns. But they had waxed the floor and I fell. I got up and started again and I fell again. Now it was getting ridiculous, but I went back and I did it again. As I reflect on that, I see I was motivated—I was driven. But I had no role models. People used to ask me what I wanted to be when I grew up and I'd say 'Happy!' That was all I wanted to be."

That desire for personal happiness seems to have been tempered with considerable professional ambition. "She was always a star," says newscaster Connie Chung, who was a year behind Hawn at Takoma Park Junior High School in Maryland. "She was the instructor's assistant in chemistry class and she'd sit up at the front of the room with her unbelievable posture and those spectacular legs. She was fabulous-looking. She had a great sense of herself even then."

Hawn moved to New York when she was nineteen, after performing in summer stock and small regional theaters. "I remember performing in a comedy in Washington," Hawn says. "My mother came backstage and said, 'They're laughing and I don't see where you're that funny.' And my answer to her was 'I don't either.' That's where the aspect of truth comes in—don't massage me, don't tell me how wonderful I am.

"But," Goldie continues, "my parents hung in there with me. I'd be singing downstairs and my father would yell, 'You're sharp! Can't you hear that?' I was always guided."

Hawn went on auditions and worked as a go-go dancer ("I never stripped") and eventually landed a job in L.A., dancing in a revival of *Pal Joey* opposite Frankie Avalon. Russell, who himself played minor-league baseball, believes Hawn's rigorous dance training has enhanced her acting. "Goldie is always interested in finding out what her body can sustain," he says. "She's a dancer and her body is her temple. She makes her body do exactly what she wants it to do. She's very physical, and I think people respond to that physical quality."

During a job dancing on a television show, Hawn met Art Simon, an agent at William Morris. "I thought he was coming on," she says. "But he called me at home and said, 'I have agents waiting for you here.' Two weeks later, I went for an audition and that was *Good Morning, World*."

The sitcom was short-lived, but it was Hawn's first taste of fame. "I started to feel uneasy in my skin then," she says. "I didn't know what was happening to me. I always thought that people in Hollywood

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The Fabric of Life

Solid Goldie

were fucked-up. They always seemed troubled, not happy, unlucky in their personal lives. I was scared that it would happen to me. And some of it did."

Hawn had already started therapy by the time she auditioned for her next job, *Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In*. "When I did *Laugh-In*, I went in with this person I was getting to know and I responded normally. If there was a mistake, I laughed. All the other girls who auditioned had routines. I didn't have a routine—I would mess up and start laughing and ask them to go back and they wouldn't and then I'd *really* start laughing." She pauses. "I became the ding-a-ling. And that persona started to take hold in *a big way*."

Hawn stayed with the show for three years, made a movie called *Cactus Flower* with Walter Matthau, and, at age twenty-four, won the Academy Award for best supporting actress (it sits on the mantel in the aforementioned Indian Room).

"Why did I get this?" she muses. "Why did this happen to me? Is it the fact that there's a line in my hand that says I have a very strong destiny to serve the people? Or the psychic who said there was fame written all over my forehead? What are the components that go into success?"

Laugh-In, her appointment with destiny, firmly established Hawn's persona—*Look* magazine dubbed her "television's dumbest and most delectable bonbon," and the tag stuck. "People never reacted to my giggle until *Laugh-In*," she says. "And for the most part, people in the business treated me like the Giggly Girl. They thought I was *stoned* because I was laughing all the time. They'd say, 'What's she on?' But I sort of knew I had a good head on my shoulders and that I was a pretty solid young lady." Meryl Streep concurs. "There's no bullshit about her. She's a meat-and-potatoes girl with an inexhaustible amount of energy."

Hawn credits Warren Beatty, with whom she co-starred first in the forgettable 1971 film *$* and then in the classic *Shampoo* (1975), with being the first person to take her seriously. "Warren gave me a boost because he told me I was smart," she recalls. "He gave me a lot of confidence." She became interested in the workings of Hollywood and began calling story editors and production executives about projects in development. "She paid attention to the business of the town when it wasn't fashionable," says Ron Meyer, her agent since 1986. "She always got it." One of the women she called was Anthea Sylbert, who had designed the extraordinarily skimpy costumes Hawn wore in *Shampoo*. ("We had to have matching panties," Hawn says of the crotch-skimming dresses. "They were so-o-o-o short.") "Goldie and I were eating seaweed at Mr. Chow," recalls Sylbert, "and Goldie said, 'Why don't we have a company?' " Around the same time, roughly 1982, Hawn was also calling Nancy Meyers, then a story editor for producer Ray Stark. "I was quitting my job," Meyers recalls. "And Goldie called and said, 'Work for me.' "

Meyers and her partners, Charles Shyer and Harvey Miller, had an idea for a movie about a Jewish American princess who joins the army. "We pitched it to her," recalls Meyers, "and she said, 'I'll do it.' She was smart. She was after good material, and, despite the fact that a major studio head, who is now even more major, felt that Goldie playing Jewish would not help her career, she said yes."

Private Benjamin, which Hawn produced, grossed $110 million and garnered her (and the screenplay) an Academy Award nomination. "And now they all expect *Private Benjamin*," she says impa-

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tiently. "Those things don't happen—you go seven years and you get another hit if you're lucky. You don't bang out one hit movie after another.

"This business is symptomatic of manic-depressive behavior," she continues. "You're up and you're down, you're up and you're down. My father was a big influence there—he nailed it into me: *reality, reality, reality*. Don't kid yourself. Don't fool yourself. And there is, for me, a very keen search for reality at all times. A reality-based conversation. The truth."

Hawn thinks all of her children will follow her into show business. "I don't think there's any way they're not going to," she says. "My daughter, definitely, 100 percent, no question. She is consciously waiting until she gets older, but she could get offers right now. And I think, if they're talented, then great." Goldie smiles. "If they're not talented, I'll be the first to tell them."

Following a breakfast of eggs Benedict (with a dash of cayenne pepper) and French fries ("how crispy") at a hotel restaurant in Santa Monica, Hawn lights up a cigarette. "I do all my vices at once," she says, taking her first puff. She is indulgent in a disciplined sort of way—a rich breakfast, but only once a week; a smoke, but only once a day. That discipline also extends to her professional life. She may say that her personal life takes precedence, but Hawn is deeply committed to her career. "Goldie is schizophrenically ambitious," says Anthea Sylbert. "But she loves to work."

In fact, since 1989, Goldie has worked constantly. *Bird on a Wire*, in which she co-starred with Mel Gibson, was a commercial success, and shortly afterward Disney—specifically, its Hollywood Pictures division—signed her to a seven-picture, $30 million deal. "It made so much sense," says Ron Meyer, who negotiated the deal. "We felt it could be beneficial to everybody."

Except that, three years later, Hawn has made only one film for the studio—*Deceived* (and that wasn't even for Hollywood Pictures, but rather for its intracompany rival, the vastly more successful Touchstone Pictures). *Deceived* was not such a great success, and Hawn's next two comedies—both highly commercial—are for Universal.

"They can't come up with anything for her to do," one producer says of Disney. "Think about it—they don't want Bette Midler to make movies anywhere else, or Tom Hanks, yet they let Goldie out twice." Disney Studios chairman Jeffrey Katzenberg disagrees. "We've invested in Goldie Hawn's longtime career," he explains. "If she makes great films elsewhere, it only enhances the asset to us. To be supportive is incumbent upon us." Will her next film be for Disney? "My only hope," says Katzenberg, "is that [director] Barry Levinson will call her tomorrow and ask her to be in his next movie. I want her to work with great and talented people and have great successes. My first choice would be at my studio, but, failing that, my second choice would be anywhere else."

There would, on the surface, seem to be a difficulty in developing material for Hawn—she is, after all, a persona, a movie star with a very specific image. She is known for one particular brand of comedy—the fluffball-blonde brand. "I'm aware of the situation," Hawn says, dragging on her cigarette.

"You score big in a comedy and that becomes your trump card. People don't want to see you do anything else."

Hawn, meanwhile, has actively pursued dramatic roles. She was dying to do *Sophie's Choice* ("although I knew it was impossible"), and, more recently, went

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Solid Goldie

after *Thelma and Louise* over the objections of her agent. "Ronnie [Meyer] didn't want me to do it," she says. "He had moral problems with the script. I wanted to do it with Meryl." Despite his reluctance, Meyer got Hawn a meeting with Ridley Scott, the director. "Ridley didn't want Goldie," says a source close to the production. "He thought she would overshadow his movie."

"Parts like that don't come along that often," Hawn says now. "And I'm not usually considered for those roles. A lot of times, directors don't want to deal with the baggage. They don't know where Goldie Hawn stops and the actress starts. . . . In general, directors don't like it when the star is bigger than the piece itself. They think the focus will be on that *star* rather than on the movie. I think that happened with *Thelma and Louise*."

She was, sources claim, initially reluctant to do *Deceived*, although she begs to differ. "At Disney, we had talked about working on other aspects of my acting," she recalls. "My talent. My *person*. And not necessarily doing comedy. *Deceived* was part of that."

During filming, numerous problems arose on the set and with the script, and the studio sent in an *Über*-producer to oversee the producers who were already there. "Disney likes to divide and conquer," says Damian Harris, the director. "They changed the name of the film"—it was originally *The Mrs*. "They changed lots of things. It made us all kind of club together—like being at school and saying, 'What dicks they are.' "

Hawn handled the calls to Katzenberg regarding script changes, the late-night conferences about the character, the endless back-and-forth about the filming. "I thought," she recalls, "Is Jeffrey going to have a Goldie Hawn story if I call him and say this isn't working? Will it bug him?" Apparently not. "Goldie is a team player," Katzenberg says. "She's totally about doing the best work."

Hawn's newest movie, *Crisscross*, was also plagued by script problems. Based on his novella, Scott Sommer's script is the story of a boy and his mother living in Key West, circa 1969. To support the family, the mother takes a job stripping at a local hotel. Horrified, her son becomes a drug dealer, hoping to make enough money to rescue her from this fate. "There were different visions of the movie," says a source close to the production. "Goldie felt it was too dark, too rough. They wanted an upbeat message, they wanted the kid to do good. Originally, it was more the son's story. Her part was increased significantly, but that wasn't really the problem; sometimes in terms of the tone of the piece, there were disagreements: Can't we be more poignant here, more *hope-ful?*"

As a result, *Crisscross* is reportedly something of a muddle. "It's. . .nothing," says a top agent. "It's not good or bad, it's just nothing. It won't hurt Goldie or help her."

But it was a shot at a straight dramatic role. And it doesn't seem an accident that Hawn is back doing comedies. "People feel so good when she's giggling," says Sylbert. "I want her to do comedies. They just can't be so naïve."

Or, to be less euphemistic, so youthful. Hawn's comic persona, unlike, say, Bette Midler's, does not age particularly well. There is something specifically *young*, almost unformed, about a giggling, silly, ditsy girl. (On the set of *Laugh-In*, Elvis Presley once patted Goldie on the head and said she reminded him of "a newly hatched chick.")

However, her agent may have found the solution. "Ronnie fought very hard to get Goldie in *Housesitter*," says one producer. "And it smells like a hit." *Housesitter* is the story of a dreamy architect (played by Steve Martin) and the wacky girl who installs herself in his vacant dream house, and Meyer moved quickly when Meg Ryan, who's at least fifteen years younger than Hawn, dropped out of the project. "At first everyone was saying, 'Meg Ryan being replaced by Goldie Hawn!' " says a studio executive at Universal. "But when you saw Goldie and Steve Martin together, it made sense."

Death Becomes Her was an easier call, even though Hawn's part was initially quite secondary. It is still Streep's movie, but Hawn has some great moments. "It's ironic that she has this deal at Disney," says one producer, "because in the next year she's going to be one of Universal's biggest stars."

Hawn has plans for her Disney deal, however. Her company is developing a script about divorce from the second wife's perspective, and another script, called *Mrs. Faust*, about a woman who almost sells her soul to the Devil. Callie Khouri, who wrote *Thelma and Louise*, is preparing a script "about family," and Hawn and Sylbert have ten or so other projects in various stages of development. "I'm also thinking about directing," Hawn says, taking a last puff of her cigarette. "I'm thinking about wanting to have *my* vision. I was talking to some director friends of mine and I asked, 'What's it like to direct?' And they said, 'It's like being in front of a moving train and running as fast as you can.' And I said to Kurt, 'Isn't that what my life is?' And he said, 'Yes—of course you can direct. A director answers a thousand questions a day and you do that anyway.' "

Hawn smiles broadly and bobs her head slightly in that way she so often does in the movies. "I think I'd like the control," she says. "Some power can be fun." □

The Émigré Muse

(Continued from page 196) the only one / as tall as I am / so then stand beside me / brow to brow," wrote Mayakovski. The son of a Georgian forester, gangling, difficult, and often suicidal, the poet had been jailed for revolutionary activity three times before he was seventeen, and now had the demigod status of a great poet. He had been cleaned up by Lili Brik and doubtless by Elsa Triolet so that his teeth were no longer rotting brown stumps, and he dressed, Tatiana told Iuri Tiourin, with some flair: "Pressed pants, a cardigan, simple but elegant."

He immediately acted smitten; she thought his infatuation was a joke, and her first reaction was to rush off to the doctor's. Mayakovski insisted on going with her in the taxi, where he knelt to offer her his hand and his heart. All she could think about was not coughing in his face, and she wouldn't let him wait for her at the doctor's. "And until the day he left," she wrote her mother back in Russia, "I saw him every day and became very friendly with him. If I've ever really liked one of my admirers then it's him, mostly because of his talent, but even more because of the surprising and even touching way he treats me."

Their contemporary the critic Roman Jakobson told Wiktor Woroszylski, the author of a life of Mayakovski, that "in Paris they were together all the time. Whoever met the two of them would remember how attentive and shy he was,

ANDREW FEZZA

how careful to avoid all roughness and ambiguity. He was delighted by her, as he called it, 'absolute hearing' for poetry and willingly recited out of memory Pasternak, sometimes Esenin, most often his own poems, for her.... [He] was impressed by the fact that Tatiana was not a genuine Parisian, but a Russian with Parisian polish—smart, well-bred, and resolute, full of strength and courage, so unlike the female frailty he knew. He avoided talking politics with Tatiana."

As well he might. She felt free to write to her mother about him, but hid him from her grandmother, her uncle, Alexander, and her aunt Sandra. He was a Communist, and they were victims of the Revolution. "She was afraid, but she was in love," says Tiourin. "She loved poetry, and he was a famous poet. He was no longer with Lili Brik, and had no one permanent in his life." While Mayakovski was in Paris, he wrote to Lili Brik to send money to Tatiana's mother.

He had an illegitimate daughter with a Russian-American woman, whom he had just visited in the South of France, but Tatiana was the woman he loved. He left Paris in November 1928, but returned in February. Tiourin continues: "They decided they would get married, that he would return to Paris in the fall. He was sure she'd come back to Russia with him. The agreement was precise: they would get engaged when he returned."

In his "Letter to Tatyana Yacovleva," the second of the two poems inspired by her, Mayakovski wrote:

But anyway
someday I'll take you back with me alone
or together with Paris.

He never came back to Paris; after his return to Moscow, he was denied another exit visa. Whether Lili Brik, who broke all the dishes when she heard about Mayakovski and Tatiana, took jealousy as far as to lean on her friends in the Cheka (the precursor to the K.G.B.) so that he could never see Tatiana again or whether it was simply a bureaucratic mess-up is still open to discussion. Bengt Jangfeldt in his book *Love Is the Heart of Everything*, a collection of the letters of Mayakovski and Lili Brik, argues that there is no record of any application from Mayakovski for an exit visa. It could, of course, as easily have been lost or destroyed.

Tatiana's experience growing up in post-revolutionary Russia may have made her wary of Communist machinations, and it is certain that she did not want to return to the Soviet Union, which marriage to Mayakovski would have required. She met Viscount Bertrand du Plessix fairly soon after Mayakovski's return to Moscow. Her state of mind at the time is unknown; disappointment because Mayakovski did not return, panic, anger, the simple wish to conform and fit into the adopted country are all possible. She may also have fallen in love: du Plessix was handsome and dashing; a promising diplomat, he spoke four languages. They married in 1929. "She held back her emotions, and never told me how she felt about that time," says Iuri Tiourin. "Bourgeois Russian girls were taught not to show their emotions under any circumstance."

In April 1930, persecuted, dejected, and feeling trapped, Mayakovski shot himself. There is no record of Tatiana's reaction to his death. Edward J. Brown, in his book, *Mayakovsky: A Poet in the Revolution*, goes into the Russian controversy that brought Tatiana to public attention in the Soviet Union forty years later. Since Mayakovski was considered second only to Lenin as a purveyor of the revolutionary spirit, it was his agitational verse that was disseminated, while his private, lyrical works were held back. But his long affair and involvement with Lili Brik, a Jew, needed to be discredited, so two articles appeared in the mass Soviet press in 1968 "to destroy Lili Brik as the great love of Mayakovsky's life in order to install in her place a 'true Russian' girl (not a Jew, of course), Tatiana Yacovleff. Had things worked out right, they say, the great Soviet poet would have repatriated his Russian beauty, married her, and lived with her happily ever after, building 'socialism.' "

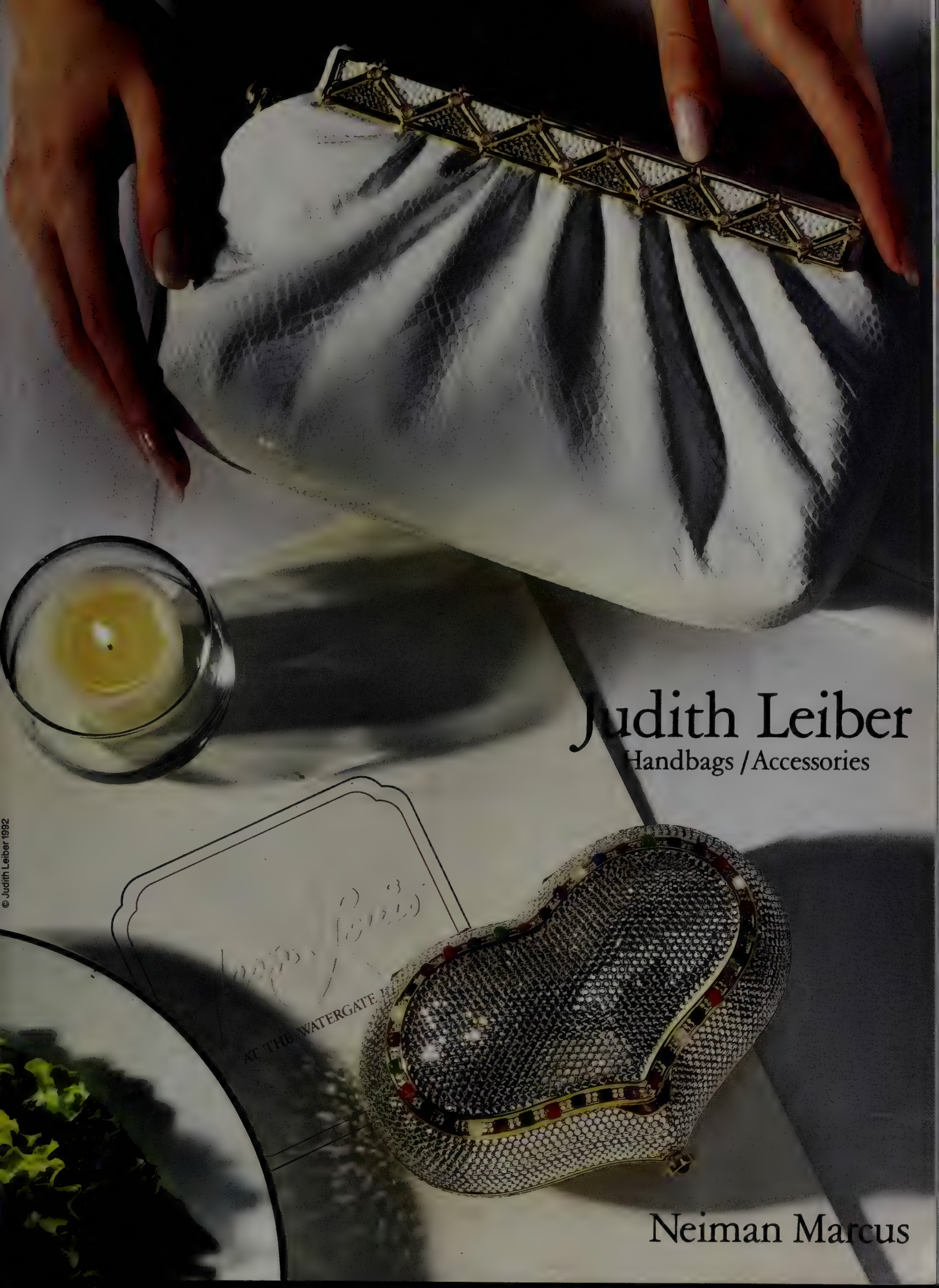
Alex Liberman views all of this with gentle equanimity. "She never wanted to be treated as a Mayakovski curiosity. Every Russian who arrived wanted to know if she'd slept with him, which by the way she didn't. In a curious way I was sort of proud that a great genius loved this extraordinary woman that I loved, too, and who loved me. There was a certain understanding, that a person of quality and genius had appreciated this special being."

In 1930, Bertrand and Tatiana du Plessix were sent to the French Embassy in Warsaw, where the ambassadress, Mme. Laroche, tutored Tatiana in the finer points of diplomatic entertaining. Francine du Plessix was born in the embassy, which disproves the persistent rumor that Mayakovski was her father. A year later, the du Plessix returned to Paris, where Bertrand went into business, unsuccessfully, and it was Tatiana who took care of them, by making hats for a private clientele.

"They were wonderful—we used to fight over them," says Marina Schouwaloff, née Princess Mestchersky, a grand aristocrat fashion model who became the *directrice* of furs at Christian Dior. "Boaters with roses," she says—a form recalled by everyone who knew Tatiana's hats—"hats with veils; they made you look so beautiful." She worked at home. Her marriage to du Plessix gradually cooled; they both had other involvements and lived separate lives.

In 1936 she was in the South of France, on her way to lunch at Aldous Huxley's in a sports car driven by a French war hero with a wooden leg. The car skidded on an oil slick and turned over; the driver's wooden leg became wedged in such a way that it stopped Tatiana's head from being severed. By the time help arrived, her face was black; she was taken to the morgue at Hyères, presumed dead. Her back and arm had been burned by leaking battery acid, and her crushed larynx was to make her voice a low growl for the rest of her life. She spent the next two years in and out of the hospital while a surgeon named De Savitch reconstructed her arm and part of her back. She endured 360 skin grafts.

Alexander Liberman at that point was a young painter who had studied with André Lhote, and who supported himself by working for the great poster artist Cassandre and for Lucien Vogel at the weekly illustrated newsmagazine *Vu*. He was already divorced from a German ski champion. His father's fortunes, which had declined after his exile, were on the upswing by the late thirties, so Alex had more time to paint. He had a villa at Sainte-Maxime in the South of France, named Va-et-Vient (Come-and-Go), and he was there in 1938 with Luba Krassin, one of the three daughters of the Soviet ambassador to Britain who had been his guardian in the West. They saw some chairs he liked in an antiques shop. "They are reserved for the Comtesse du Plessix," he was told. Luba Krassin promptly invited Tatiana to dinner. She came with the surgeon De Savitch. "From then on," says Alex, "it started. I was dazzled with her. Bringing her home late one day, I saw her looking at me strangely. I took a house in London with Luba Krassin, but I was unhappy. My childish imagination... One day I received a formal letter from



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Tatiana. Her uncle, Alexander Iacovleff, had just died, and his art library was for sale. I decided to drop everything and go to Paris. We fell madly in love."

The relationship was discreet, because theoretically clandestine, played out against the beauty of Paris and the threats of war, surrounded with a tight web of relationships, both professional and personal, that united an artistic émigré group across generations. The unofficial love story was almost a family tradition. Tatiana and Alex went to Le Dôme, Brasserie Lipp, Le Petit St.-Benoît, and Prunier on Avenue Victor Hugo, where Alex's mother, Henriette, had sent a note to Alexander Iacovleff, beginning their long affair. "That was a love that gave me everything," says Alex of his mother's relationship with the painter, "Tatiana and my career."

It was Henriette Liberman who had "dressed the savage" at the request of Iacovleff. Iacovleff's paintings had been published as art books by Lucien Vogel, the founder of *Vu*, where Alex would work, and Vogel also supplied pieces from his magazine *La Gazette du Bon Ton* to *Vogue*, which was owned by Condé Nast when Condé Nast was still a person. Iacovleff had introduced Tatiana to Vogel and to Fatma Hanoum, an émigré Armenian who taught Tatiana how to make hats. Even Bertrand du Plessix's separate life related back to Alex, for one of his girlfriends, according to Francine du Plessix Gray, was an American magazine editor in Paris, and another was a sister of Luba Krassin, Alex's childhood friend and the woman with whom he was living when he first found Tatiana again. "Extraordinary," says Liberman, "the way everything connects."

In May 1940, Hitler invaded Holland, Belgium, and Luxembourg, and moved into France. Alex, who was working at *Vu*, was called into the French army, but he was deferred because of his recurrent bleeding ulcers. When France capitulated, he drove his mother to Royan in the Free Zone. Guards turned them back, but Alex refused to give up, tried again, and talked his way through. He now says it was "a miracle of persuasion." From there they made their way to Va-et-Vient at Sainte-Maxime.

In Paris, Tatiana went to the Centre d'Accueil de l'Auxiliaire Social, where society women volunteered to help the refugees who were converging on Paris from the North. Some Poles had been walking for three weeks. A sixteen-year-old upper-class Hungarian named Gitta Sereny, who was alone in Paris studying acting, was working at the Centre. She had been working day and night with no sleep, and Tatiana—"beautiful, massive, with that deep voice"—said, "*C'est assez—viens dormir chez moi.*" She took the young woman to an apartment that was all white, had her bathe in a "meticulous" bathroom, and put her to bed. In the morning Tatiana sent Francine out to buy ham for the girl's breakfast, to Francine's astonishment, for she had never been out alone before.

When Paris was invaded, Tatiana drove Francine to the Château de Villandry, which belonged to a friend of hers named Isabelle de la Bouillerie, who had turned over various outbuildings to refugees. Gitta Sereny was there as well, supervising sixteen refugee children. "Tatiana helped as she could," says Gitta Sereny. "Suffering humanity wasn't really her speed, but she washed the floors with great energy." One night during a bombardment, a barn full of straw was used as a shelter by local peasants. According to Alex Liberman, Tatiana caught one of the peasants smoking a cigarette and slapped him.

In order to obtain medicine, ration tickets, and bread for the children, the women in the château had to create links to the occupying authorities. Gitta Sereny, as a young Hungarian society girl who spoke German, was delegated to make friends with them. "It angered people to see me with them, but Tatiana understood what I felt," says Sereny, who grew up to be a prominent political journalist and a leading authority on the Third Reich. Three of the Germans were particularly sympathetic to the household of women and refugee children; Isabelle de la Bouillerie invited them to the château for meals, and she and Gitta Sereny would let out their fury at the three officers in the salon. Tatiana never came into any room where the Germans were.

In July 1940, Isabelle de la Bouillerie heard that Bertrand du Plessix had been shot down over Gibraltar. He had organized the first air-force squadron for Charles de Gaulle and the Free French. Tatiana decided to try to join Alex Liberman in the Free Zone, and went to Tours to get passes for Francine and herself. The commandant attempted some banter: "Du Plessix. Are you related to Cardinal de Richelieu?" "No," said Tatiana, "to Camille du Plessis"—the Dame aux Camélias of Dumas *père*. He got the joke and issued the passes, telling her, "You are unsafe in the occupied zone as the wife and daughter of a Resistance hero."

Tatiana did not tell Francine at once that her father had died; his plane had gone down, but there was no confirmation of his death for a long time. They joined Liberman in Sainte-Maxime, where they spent three months. Francine's friends recall the sense of gaiety and safety in the house, and their crushes on Alex. "Alex gave me his socks when I went out in the wind and rain. I felt like a heroine," says Olga Davydoff. Micheline Fried, who stayed with them, was in awe of Tatiana. "This immense woman with clinking jewelry, mad colors, a presence, a life, a dimension like no one else."

Thanks to arrangements made by Simon Liberman, who was already in New York, they made their way to Portugal, but not before Alex had secured a return visa to France. "I didn't want to leave as if I were fleeing," he says. "The train to Spain stopped in a tunnel, and we thought it was the end." But Tatiana's claustrophobia asserted itself only when they were faced with a packed train at the Madrid station; Alex had to push her onto it forcibly. The boat from Lisbon was a pleasure craft generally used for short trips to the Azores; the Atlantic crossing, in January 1941, was stormy and rough. Tatiana and Francine stayed in the cabin while Alex gamely dined up above.

A headline in the *New York World-Telegram* announced: FRENCH COUNTESS ARRIVES WITH CHILD. Alex and Tatiana took separate but adjoining apartments, as they were not married. Vogel was already working at *Vogue*, where Alex got a job, was fired on a Friday by the art director, Dr. Agha, and rehired the following Monday by Mr. Condé Nast. Iva Patcévitch, who had been the head of the *Vogue* office in Paris and who had become a friend, was also in New York. Tatiana got an interview at Henri Bendel through the very social son of the Russian admiral Makaroff, a colleague of her father, who was then living in New York. She was hired to design hats for $75 a week, and was later lured away to Saks Fifth Avenue for $125 a week. There she became famous as Tatiana of Saks. "Don't ever learn to speak English," said Adam Gimbel. "It's part of your attraction that you can't." At first they had little money, but were used to a high and generous life. "Our friends here were shocked by our taste for luxury," says Liberman. "I complained about the cost of taxis, and was made to feel that we were terrible, frivolous people."

In 1942 their friends Beatrice and Fernand Leval persuaded them to get mar-

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ried; Tatiana took a lunch break from Saks, Alex a lunch break from *Vogue*, and all four went downtown to a judge; after the ceremony, they both returned to work. Alex had found a house for $200 a month on Seventieth Street, in what was then an unfashionable part of the street, too close to the Third Avenue El. "It was," says Gitta Sereny, who stayed with them at the end of 1942, "a totally impulsive household, full of endless and limitless hospitality. I never had a feeling of no money; there was always a lot of Russian spoken, and French. You hardly heard English. Tatiana was the first person I'd seen who walked around without shoes and stockings, but incredibly well-done toenails, like her fingernails. There was a French *réveillon* with an enormous Christmas tree and a Bûche de Noël and lots of people and presents for everyone. They talked about painters a lot; the house was full of painters."

Francine du Plessix Gray recalls "the early Christmases, when we were living in two rooms and didn't have a penny, but there were fifty guests and a tiny little gift for each one. It was lavish and generous, full of largess. My mother created this whole world on a grand scale. Someone would play the piano, and I remember Claude Alphand with a guitar singing 'Je Tire Ma Révérence.' It was '42–'43, and we were all thinking about occupied France."

"In New York, everything was Russian," says Micheline Fried, Francine's friend, who came to visit. "Tatiana had imposed her style on the house; everything was white, with enormous amounts of plants. And everything was very big; there was a different dimension of fantasy, of fashion. Russian friends and Russian spoken on every floor, and in this bright warmth, and you didn't have the right to be weak, you had to be somebody. Those who needed Tatiana's regard had to surpass themselves. She helped Alex by bringing together fascinating people, but she spoke very directly, and wasn't at all polite. The way she looked at you dissected you; she asked questions, but then she really listened. There was a sense of proportion and aesthetics; she built this world where there was just them."

Alex's home movies from the late forties show Tatiana and Francine disporting themselves with the Patcévitches in rented summer houses. Tatiana is blonde, suntanned, with a natural animal grace, strangely set off by full makeup and large pieces of costume jewelry worn with her bathing suits. Her extraordinarily prehensile toes can be seen at work, confirming Francine's description of one of her mother's party tricks—being able to undo a man's tie and unbutton his shirt using only her toes.

When Condé Nast died, Iva Patcévitch became the president of the company, which belonged to an English press lord, an absentee owner. It was not a rich company. Liberman was used to the intense pressure of a newsweekly, to spending every weekend remaking the pages of *Vu* because of Hitler's latest move. *Vogue* was "a very nice thing to do. You went swimming lunchtime at the Shelton, people threw darts in the art department. You had French lunches with the nice ladies at *Vogue*. Patcévitch and I were the well-spoken foreigners, and half the magazine had been made in Paris until the war. It was a very gentle, genteel operation. You dealt with very attractive Millicent Fenwicks and Babe Paleys and ladies who wore flowered hats, sometimes by Tatiana. I don't think *Vogue* in those days was considered journalism."

Liberman brought journalism into *Vogue*, as did the great features editor Alene Talmey (who trained, among others, Joan Didion, who remembers Talmey's injunction: "Action verbs! Action verbs!"). The magazine woke up to the war, sent Lee Miller to Europe as correspondent, became, in one of Liberman's favorite words, "modern."

"I still basically thought I was a painter, and yearned for some kind of safe job that would allow me to continue painting. I progressed in my career at *Vogue*, and she progressed in her career, and things became a little easier. I had a history of bleeding ulcers; I needed to be surrounded by a certain atmosphere of warmth, which I felt through the years at Condé Nast. It gave me reassurance and courage, because in art there is no 'success,' so it's very nice to have the tangible proof that some magazine you work on sells, is a success. Then you can go to a studio and do anything you want; it frees you."

At first Liberman painted in a room at the top of the house, then in a studio nearby. Tatiana never watched him work, nor did she ever discuss *Vogue* matters with him. "I hated to bring work home, relive the torments. It was done, it was printed, it was gone. That is what I like about magazines. Tatiana would sometimes say, 'Who did this ghastly cover?' 'I did,' I'd say. For a long time she couldn't understand the new photographers I was bringing in; 'Don't you want to make women pretty? Attractive?' she'd ask. She still adored Horst, Beaton, the flattering ones, but my role was to introduce different feelings, new concepts. I was conveying a certain message, and twenty pages of little dresses allowed me to do two pages on Barnett Newman."

Through the 1950s, Liberman took photographs of artists in their studios for *Vogue*, and in 1959 they were shown at New York's Museum of Modern Art. In 1960 he exhibited his powerful circle paintings at Betty Parsons. His reputation as an artist grew through the sixties and seventies, with shows and commissions for the huge, towering metal sculptures he started making out of old oil tanks from disused gas stations. By then he and Tatiana had bought a country house in Connecticut, where he spent the weekends and summer working on the sculptures. The dichotomy between the Condé Nast persona and the artist kept growing; in 1962 he was made editorial director of the Condé Nast Publications, which was still a self-contained, smallish world. "Up to a certain point I was known more as an artist, but as Si Newhouse bought magazines and the company became an empire, I find I'm suddenly known more as a magazine executive.

"My sculpture is much more successful than the painting, but my heart is in the painting; I feel it's my nature. Perhaps I shouldn't have worked at *Vogue*, perhaps I should have been an artist, but I had a sense of obligation to be a provider to Tatiana and Francine and my mother. I have this terrible sense of human responsibility. Perhaps if I'd been an absolute real talent, I would have overcome certain things. I watched people like Barnett Newman; they're ruthless in their private life, ruthless. To be the wife of an artist can be appalling. My choice was that life would come first; Tatiana would come first.

"It was a very, very solid relationship based on skin, and the real Tatiana that perhaps only I knew. I never had a 'real conversation' with Tatiana. She thought that was destructive. She was my stabilizer, my psychoanalyst. In her mind, all problems had simple resolutions; in my mind, things became complicated.

"I tend to brood; she thought about things, but there was a desire to cling to clarity—for her own sanity and everybody else's sanity—that was refreshing. But sometimes it would be nice to chew over things, and she avoided it. So I painted or did some sculpture, to ask the unresolvable questions there. If she came to the stu-

dio, she would step in, look around, and say, 'Oh, it's so frightening,' and walk out. I think my excess frightened her.

"Tatiana had great mental stoicism, but she was flayed, an *écorchée vivante*. She was extremely sensitive to pain, and not tough at all. As a young White Russian, she had been excluded from the Soviet system, so she compensated for what she thought was her lack of education. She had a passion for catching up on everything she'd missed in Russia. I did everything to impress her."

Tatiana's difficult relationship with Francine has formed, for a great part, the basis of Francine's work as a novelist. They had radically different characters. Francine learned English fast in New York, excelled at Spence, and went on to Bryn Mawr and Barnard. In an autobiographical essay, she writes about Tatiana in Paris at her dressing table: "Every one of her gestures to me has always been utterly gentle, yet there is a certain violence in the silence she maintains with me, all the more so because with the rest of the world she is notoriously loquacious, exuberantly and constantly talking. As I come in for my almost daily crouch (arms about my legs, head on my knees to make myself as unobtrusive as possible) she blows me a kiss with her fingers. And then returns full attention to the image in the mirror, to the buffing and polishing of her marvelous face.... As I look back on it, the silence was pure and principled; it had no pretense.... I'd learn later that she was very shy, that much of her noisomeness and bravado were masks for her great timidity; that she'd had relations of mutual dislike with her own mother."

Francine du Plessix Gray describes an Irving Penn photograph of herself with Alex and Tatiana as "telling." "Mother and stepfather huddled together in a love mighty and impenetrable; stepfather leaning slightly toward the daughter, a bridge between the two women; sulking girl setting herself apart, feeling ostracized by the power of the parents' love."

Alex Liberman "assumed both maternal and paternal roles, rehearsing my memorizations of Milton or Blake, dealing with report cards, dentists, teachers, imposing curfew hours and taboos on lipsticks, instructing me about the period, the dangers of early sex, the mysteries of birth control."

After college and a two-year stint of journalism, instead of going to Union Theological Seminary for a degree in divinity, she went to Paris, where she worked in fashion and briefly lived the chic life that she felt Tatiana understood. She did not marry the French prince to whom she was engaged, but returned to New York and met the painter Cleve Gray in 1956. Although he was American, he spoke French and had lived in Paris. He tells the story of his second date with Francine: "Tatiana came down the stairs to inspect me. Her eyes were half closed, squinting with great intensity, but she was very quiet. After about twenty minutes she went back up the stairs and called out, 'Alex! *Il n'est pas pédéraste!*' I didn't tell Francine that for years."

When Cleve Gray proposed, Alex said, "This is a marriage made in heaven." Like Alex, Gray had studied with André Lhote in Paris. "They were," says Gray, "the first people I could talk to. Except for those parties with the fashionable people, it was the kind of life I wanted."

"Those parties" are part of the Liberman legend. They were huge cocktail parties at the house on Seventieth Street, gatherings of people as diverse as Elsa Maxwell and Salvador Dali, Adrian of Hollywood and Irving Penn, Charles Addams and Marlene Dietrich, who was a great and close friend of Tatiana's. They were also professional occasions, with magazine people and fashion designers: Christian Dior, whom Tatiana adored, and later Yves Saint Laurent, to whom she unconditionally switched her allegiance after Dior's death, whom she fiercely promoted, whose clothes she wore until the end of her life. A grateful Saint Laurent (and Pierre Bergé, who was enchanted by her connection with great Russian literature) used to send her fabrics, and she had her Saint Laurents copied by a tailor on Ischia, who performed the same cloning for Pauline de Rothschild. Her style remained consistent almost from her arrival in New York: long red nails, short waved hair, huge pieces of costume jewelry, tunics and pants. This was her uniform. The social life rankled Tatiana's daughter: a wariness of the fashionable world probably colored all of her choices in life. "I meticulously went about being the opposite of what she was," says Francine du Plessix Gray, "while retaining many of her qualities. She taught me everything I'm proudest of knowing how to do: how to read devouringly, and give unstintingly, and love unleashingly. Really, she was the love of my life, and perhaps because she was so seductive, I had to do more repression of memory.

"This Christmas, wrapping presents for the first time with none for her, I remembered how she wrapped so beautifully. Her generosity meant there was no such thing as too many people or too much ribbon. She gave me this desire to spread joy. It's the aim of life, whether you do it through life or through your art. Her upbringing has made me so impatient with people who are *mesquin*, mean, small."

Tatiana's hospitality has been described by many of their friends. Dominique Nabokov, the photographer and widow of the composer Nicolas Nabokov, describes Christmases in the country "with ten thousand packages wrapped in gold paper, the permanent fairy tale made with hard work.

"Her instinct," adds Nabokov, "was like Balanchine's: she knew immediately if something was real, was good. Balanchine, Nicolas, Lidia and Grischa Gregory, Vera and Igor Stravinsky, Genia Doll, Davidova, Tatiana—these were all people who'd known a different world. People without exile can never understand."

In 1962 women stopped wearing hats, and Tatiana stopped working for Saks; it was about the same time that Liberman began the huge welded sculptures. One story about them is that Tatiana found them oppressive, tall and black, so he painted them bright red. At that time, too, Olga Andreyev and her husband, Henry Carlisle, were living in Connecticut, and began to see the Libermans. Olga's parents had been of the same "mild socialist" background as Tatiana's, and a mutual love of Russian poetry formed a link between them. "She was an object of wonderment and awe," says Carlisle, "truly bigger than life." When the Carlisles published their translation of Dostoyevsky's *The Idiot*, Tatiana gave one of her characteristic comments: "Dostoyevsky? Journalist!"

Olga Carlisle was struck by Tatiana's "adherence to one of the imperatives of nineteenth-century Russian life: when some impoverished lady of the Russian colony was ill, Tatiana would go to visit her. That wasn't prevalent behavior in New York." Her friends in Europe complained that she never wrote letters; Francine says it was because of her right hand, which remained lame from the car accident.

There were certain signs of her fear: she hated elevators and planes, and never flew; she and Alex crossed the Atlantic a total of sixty-five times by boat. Christian Dior's seer had warned her about airplanes, which only confirmed her resolve not to fly. At home in Connecticut and New York, the air conditioner was always on, and so were the lights: a long-lived reaction to the darkness of Russia. She

traveled around America to sell her hats, but never learned English, which led to such moments as the day she went to F. A. O. Schwarz to buy a kite for her grandsons, Luke and Thaddeus Gray.

She strode up to the salesman and announced, "I want a flying kike."

He tried to have her thrown out. "A flying kike, *now!*" she thundered.

Her insistence on French was often perceived as snobbery. Oscar de la Renta recalls a story she often told against herself: Mollie Parnis, the designer, had just bought a painting by Braque.

"I just bought the most fantastic Brake," she told Tatiana.

"You don't say 'Brake,' you say 'Braque,' " said Tatiana.

"You pronounce. I buy," answered Parnis.

The Libermans were never rich, and it was a source of pride to them that their dining-room chairs were garden chairs from Macy's, and that the entire Connecticut house had been furnished with cheap furniture from a place called Bon Marché. The floors were white linoleum, the couches upholstered in white plastic. ("Plastic is forever," Tatiana is reported to have said, accurately.) She had a green thumb that made plants grow to astonishing heights; the geraniums in the Connecticut house were the size of trees. "How do you do it?" asked Geraldine Stutz.

"Pinch! Pinch!" said Tatiana.

The Connecticut house had been bought so that they could be near Francine and Cleve and their grandchildren. It became a destination for everyone they knew. People brought their work, their books, their children, their lovers, their achievements, as tributes to Tatiana and Alex, and also for her final, telling judgment.

The scientist Jacques Le Beau says, "Ten years ago I brought a friend I like a lot to see them, and Tatiana said, 'This is the first time he brings us an interesting woman.' "

As Tatiana grew older, she became more Russian, and as emigration from the Soviet Union increased, more Russians arrived. "Was she homesick?" asks Olga Carlisle. "She never really left Russia."

Joseph Brodsky was among the first of the new exiles to become Tatiana's friend. She wasn't too sure about Solzhenitsyn, says Olga Carlisle, who was professionally involved with him. "She thought it was maybe 'Solzhenitsyn, journalist' too." Tatiana's lifelong anti-Communism made her suspicious of Francine and Cleve Gray's involvement in the anti-war movement and Senator Eugene McCarthy's campaign. But Brodsky was not political, and she took to him at once, knew instinctively from the start that he was marked for the Nobel Prize. Through Brodsky came Mikhail Baryshnikov, with whom the relationship was less close: "We weren't totally soul mates; she wasn't interested in dance and I don't know so much literature. Of course, I knew all my life who she was—the Mayakovski poems—but what we had in common was French: the songs of Brassens, Jacques Brel, 'Barbara.' And I had been collecting paintings by her uncle, Alexander Iacovleff, and told her about a painting of Tibetan monks I owned. The next time I came to see her, she went upstairs and took a beautiful miniature of boys on the beach by him off the wall, and gave it to me."

Baryshnikov remarks on "the unconditional love with which Alex treated her, and the way she enjoyed his work, the way she gave him the freedom to keep doing his main work—she'd say, 'We're going to the country, Alex has to finish his sculpture'—the pride in her voice when she said, 'He's Superman.' "

The closeness inspired all kinds of reactions; Diane Von Furstenberg named her two children Alex and Tatiana after them. "They said if I had a third child," she says, "I'd have to name it Liberman."

A friend of Baryshnikov and Brodsky's from the Soviet Union became Tatiana's closest friend: Gennady Smakov, known as Genna. He had been a film critic in Russia, and a translator; when he came to the West (in 1979) he wrote three books—one on Baryshnikov, one with Natalia Makarova, one on Russian dancers—and spent his weekends with the Libermans in Connecticut, where he cooked Russian food for them and became Tatiana's co-conspirator. "They had a true brother-and-sister relationship; it was amusing and wonderful to observe," says Baryshnikov.

In 1980, Tatiana had the first of the operations that were to confine her to New York and Connecticut for the rest of her life. That meant no more summers on Ischia; in an attempt to reproduce the benefits of Ischia, Alex had a saltwater pool installed in Connecticut in a matter of weeks. Genna went to the raucous émigré enclave in Brooklyn's Brighton Beach to buy Russian books and rent the Russian videocassettes she craved. He and Francine attempted lengthy taped interviews with her about her life, which Alex Liberman laughingly describes as "an attempt to find out if she slept with Mayakovski."

Genna died three years ago, a death which devastated Tatiana; he was only fifty. His death threw the household into chaos; Thaddeus Gray recalls that in the year after he died thirty-two cooks were tried and rejected. Elena Tchernichova, at that time the ballet mistress of the New York City Ballet, became a regular in Connecticut, and Iuri Tiourin took over the cooking duties on weekends, and exchanged such arcane questions with Tatiana as, Where does it first appear in *Anna Karenina* that Anna is a morphine addict? Her question, not his.

The day Elena Tchernichova bought a video camera, she took it up to Connecticut. "I went to the studio to film Alex painting. He put on *Die Walküre* very loud and continued painting." His studio, an extension of the second floor of the house, was soundproof: Tatiana, having spent years with her aunt Sandra practicing her scales, could not stand opera. "I filmed him for two and a half hours. Then he watched it, and loved it; he said it was because of the music. I suggested we show it to Tatiana. She watched it holding his hand, and with her eyes full of tears. At the end she kissed my hand and said, 'Thank you, I never saw that before.' And Alex thanked me, because he said he was able to see her face looking at it. Two years before she died she finally saw him at work."

"Tatiana was for me an extraordinary lightning conductor," says Alex Liberman. "Maybe in Europe one had always been, as a refugee, in a deep sense, afraid. When we escaped from France, I was never afraid, because I was with her. I never feared things from the outside, or things from the inside. It was a haven."

Everyone who knew her remembers her huge ring, set with red stones that were garnets, not rubies. It was enormous, and reminded Francine's friend Didi d'Anglejan of the globe that Atlas holds up in Rockefeller Center, diagonally across from Saks Fifth Avenue. Chic and style are considered lies, untruths, but when they follow poverty, starvation, exile, they are triumphs of imagination and survival. "She was on an entirely different frequency," says Joseph Brodsky. "While she dwelt presumably in high society, café society, demimonde, she was essentially of a much stronger core. Her circle and her interests were not defined by individual success or failure, but were composed of people going after something of consequence in art or literature. What she was really after was the spark." ☐

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(Continued from page 214) he had used at that time, and Mark Schnapp of Miami, who received a call from Willie Smith two days after the incident and remained on the case as part of the four-lawyer defense team after Black took over. Although Black reportedly received only a quarter of a million dollars for his services, a relatively low fee considering the family involved, he took the case because of the international attention focused on it. However, the total amount spent on Smith's defense seemed, by comparison with the money the prosecution spent, prodigious. Five private investigators worked for months digging up information on the background of Patricia Bowman, as well as of Anne Mercer and her boyfriend, Chuck Desiderio, the two people Bowman telephoned to come to the Kennedy compound on the night of the incident. In addition, a dozen or so expert witnesses were called to cast doubt on Bowman's story.

I was not dismayed by Moira Lasch's lackluster, almost indifferent style during the jury selection. While Roy Black charmed and seduced the potential jurors with his folksy friendliness, she seemed distant and icy. From my early days in show business, however, I remembered actors who mumbled and disappointed during rehearsals and then gave electrifying performances on opening night or once the camera started rolling. I assumed that she was saving herself for opening night, or, in this case, the first day of the trial. But she wasn't. Nothing changed. What we saw in the beginning was what we got throughout.

Lasch, who graduated magna cum laude from Vassar, studied art history at Boston University, and attended law school at the University of Maryland, is married to a dentist, Dr. Alan Lasch. West Palm Beach court reporters, familiar with her ways, observed that she was so obsessive about her teeth that she brushed them in a public rest room during court recesses. Everyone spoke of her lack of courtesy. She did not reply to reporters who said good morning to her in the corridors of the courthouse. Nor did she reply to morning salutations from Roy Black and his team. Lasch seemed not to mind being disliked; it was as if she mistook her unpopularity for strength, even though it undermined her over and over again. By the end of the trial, she had no one rooting for her.

Oblivious to her daily bad reviews in the newspapers and on television, she persevered in her somber style, never playing to the jury, never deviating from her questions written in longhand on a lined yellow tablet, sometimes seeming not to listen to the answers to her own questions. The only indication of any inner conflict with her frosty demeanor was her nervous left foot. It was in perpetual agitated motion, waving frantically in the air under the table when she sat, or stepping in and out of her open-toed sling-back shoe in a frenzied movement when she stood. She spoke in the passionless voice of a parochial-school nun, without resonance or energy, and her single vocal variant was shrillness. Her nostrils white with indignation, she asked Smith tauntingly, "What are you, some kind of sex machine?" when he stated he had ejaculated twice in short order, once on himself and again, a short swim and minutes later, in Bowman's vagina.

One of Lasch's most foolhardy decisions was to try to have Judge Lupo replaced before the trial started on the grounds that she was prejudiced in favor of the defense, as reflected in her "scowling, glaring, and frowning" at Lasch. The motion was denied, and this attempt to have the judge recuse herself proved to be a catastrophic error. The disharmony between Lupo and Lasch overflowed into a mutual dislike that was apparent to all. Lasch might have succeeded in having Lupo replaced if, instead of complaining about the judge's faces and prejudice, she had brought up the fact that Lupo's husband and the husband of Lasch's co-counsel, Ellen Roberts, were former law partners engaged in litigation with each other, over money. Had Smith kept his first lawyer, Herbert "Jack" Miller, Judge Lupo might have had to excuse herself from the case, as Miller had been a professor at Georgetown University Law Center, which she had attended. When Lasch asked Lupo whether she ever knew Miller, Lupo, according to court papers filed by the prosecution, "refused to answer the question and just glared at me hostilely." On one occasion during Smith's turn on the stand, Lasch persisted in a line of questioning regarding the credibility of other witnesses' testimony, which brought forth repeated objections from the defense and which prompted the judge to give her a blistering dressing-down in front of the crowded courtroom, as well as the television audience.

It was during the testimony of two key witnesses, Anne Mercer and Senator Kennedy, that the difference between Lasch and Black became most apparent. Mercer was an important witness for the prosecution, because, as a friend of the accuser, who had dined with her on the night of the incident and gone to the Kennedy estate to rescue her later, she was needed to establish Patricia Bowman's credibility. It was Mercer's boyfriend, Chuck Desiderio, who had removed an urn from the Kennedy house to prove that Bowman had been there. In an ill-conceived decision, Anne Mercer appeared twice, for money, on the tabloid television show *A Current Affair*, and her second interview aired on the first night of the trial. Mercer was arrogant, hostile, haughty, a disastrous witness, and Black decimated her piece by piece. With an understanding of courtroom theatrics woefully lacking in his adversary, Black, in introducing the stolen urn, placed it in front of Mercer and left it there throughout her testimony, like contraband, for the jury to ponder. All professorial kindliness gone, he moved in on Mercer like a hungry pit bull, in a belittling attack laced with sarcasm. And then, having defeated her, having deprived her of all credibility, having reduced her to a cheap money-grubber out to make a buck off her few moments of contact with America's most famous family, he kept on going, relentlessly, until he had achieved her total humiliation. To view the woman's degradation was one of the most embarrassing moments of the trial. Frank Cerabino of *The Palm Beach Post* described Mercer as looking "like someone who had been thrown into the lion's cage with a pork-chop tied around her neck." Throughout Black's attack on Mercer, Lasch and her co-counsel, Ellen Roberts, whispered together as if the carnage in front of them were not taking place. It could have been that Lasch was so angered by Mercer's *A Current Affair* appearance that she hardly came to her witness's rescue. Once she did rise to make an objection, but that was an objection to a tone of voice used by Black, an objection that Judge Lupo overruled.

Black, who during the jury-selection process had allowed, even led, potential jurors to indicate that Senator Kennedy was the least admired of all the Kennedys, bringing up his drinking, his womanizing, and, of course, Chappaquiddick, as a way of getting rid of the Kennedy haters, opened his arguments by paying homage to the senator, extolling his virtues, saying that he had been a father to twenty-one fatherless Kennedy children—two of the late president John Kennedy, eleven of the late attorney general Robert Kennedy, four of the late film actor Peter Lawford, whose first wife was Patricia Kennedy Lawford, and four of Stephen Smith, the late husband of Jean Kennedy Smith, the mother of William Kennedy Smith. "Senator Kennedy is very close to his sister Jean," he said. "They

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are the two youngest in the family."

The senator, who caused a near riot outside the courthouse on his arrival, walked past the cameras looking fit, trim even, after his bloated, red-faced demeanor following the Easter incident and his less than laudable performance during the Clarence Thomas hearings. In October he had acknowledged his personal shortcomings in a televised speech at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, in which he spoke of "the faults in the conduct of my private life. I realize that I alone am responsible for them, and I am the one who must confront them." Everything about him in Palm Beach—hair, suit, tie—was in order. He was accompanied by his sister Patricia Kennedy Lawford. There was no sense of walking toward his nephew's ignominy. He could have been going to another Kennedy wedding instead of being a witness at a rape trial. The imperial Kennedy had taken over. He entered the courtroom with the bailiff. He waved to Willie. He took the oath. He took the stand. His presence overpowered the court. The afternoon was his.

The senator, who has never felt shy about using his family's grief to best advantage, brought his eyes just to the point of tears and his voice just to the point of cracking. He said he had been in Palm Beach that weekend because it was the first time since Steve Smith's death that they had all been together, and he had wanted to spend more time with his sister Jean, who was Steve's widow. He was up that night, he said, because he and his sister and some family friends, including William Barry, had been recalling and mourning Steve, who had died eight months before. He said that he had lost a brother in the war, and that Steve had become another brother to him. "Steve Smith is Will's father. [He] was very special to me. He was next to a brother, really. We lost a brother in the war. When Jean married Steve, we had another brother. And when Steve was gone, something left all of us when we buried him."

A tear dropped down the side of Willie's face. His attorneys leaned toward him, and one offered him a handkerchief. The jury was spellbound.

"And I found that at the end of that conversation that I was not able to think about sleeping," he said. He needed to talk to his son and nephew. It was then that he got them out of bed to go out for a few beers.

"Are you close with your sister Jean?" asked Roy Black.

"Yes, very—well, very close family."

"Since the death of her husband, have you tried to spend more time with her than you normally would have?"

"I have tried. We spend a lot of time together. I think my sister Pat, who is here, and Eunice have spent a lot of time with her too. I have tried to. The other members of the family...Ethel has. Jackie has. We are a very close family."

With a little assistance from Roy Black, he was able to work in the assassination of his brother Robert.

"Could you tell us who Bill Barry is, what his relationship to the family is?"

"Well, Bill Barry was a former F.B.I. agent who now specializes in security matters. He was probably Jean and Steve's—one of their two or three best friends. He was one of my brother Bob's very best friends. And he provided security for my brother Bob in the 1968 campaign. And he was with my brother when he was killed."

"Does he have a special relationship with the family?"

"Very, very special."

"In fact, is he not the man who knocked the gun out of Sirhan Sirhan's hand?"

"Yes."

It was a masterly performance, reeking of bathos, having nothing whatever to do with the rape trial at hand, but he mesmerized the courtroom and, more important, the jury. The man who instigated the Good Friday incident by getting his son and nephew to go out drinking reversed the dynamic from a night of debauchery to one of sorrowing for dead relations. Surprisingly, Moira Lasch, who was usually prickly about the Kennedy propaganda machine, raised no objection that Black's line of questioning was irrelevant. Liquor, that distorter of memory and perception, went virtually unmentioned. And no question was asked about the senator's highly publicized appearance without his pants. The senator snowed the prosecutor.

At the end of that day, William Smith, by then a practiced giver of near-nightly statements to the media, stepped to the bank of microphones and commented, "I was very moved by a lot of things my uncle said. I think this process has been unfair to him. I don't say that in a bitter way. I just really mean it in my heart."

Patrick Kennedy, the senator's twenty-four-year-old son, took the stand next. He is a state representative in the Rhode Island legislature. He had been Will Smith's roommate at the Kennedy mansion on the Easter weekend, and it was to Patrick that Willie confessed he had "pulled out" before ejaculating into the woman he brought home from Au Bar that night. Patrick, highly nervous, one side of his face covered with hives, took the stand concurrently with newspaper revelations of a hitherto unknown drugged past, time spent in a rehab to break a reported cocaine habit while he was still a student at Andover. The beans were spilled by a former roommate at the rehab, who claimed that an abusive Senator Kennedy had tried to bribe him to retract his story. Several times, Patrick's version of events contradicted his father's. Roy Black declined to cross-examine him.

The arrival of Patricia Bowman into the courtroom was one of the most dramatic moments of the trial. In the almost nine months since the Good Friday incident, she had never made a public statement or a public appearance, maintaining a Garboesque privacy about her family, her child, and herself. So unknown was she that it was several minutes before the reporters in the media room realized that the five-foot-six-inch woman entering the courtroom was the famous Patricia Bowman. A shout went up, and reporters crowded in front of the closed-circuit monitors to stare at her in the brief time before the blue dot went up to shield her face. Her appearance, almost prim, contrasted with her reputation. "She isn't at all what I expected," several people said. We, but not the jury, had heard of her three abortions, her child born out of wedlock, her use of cocaine. She is pretty, but not beautiful. The months of waiting had taken their toll on her. Her hair that day was cut in a pageboy. She was dressed in a charcoal-gray suit, with a single strand of pearls and a gold pin.

If she was intimidated by seeing the trouncing her friend Anne Mercer had gone through several days earlier, it did not show. Even behind the blue dot, Bowman made a powerful impression on the stand as she described the events of the evening. She said that she had felt perfectly safe. "I was taking him to the Kennedy home, which I assumed would have security. There was a senator there. I didn't feel I was in any danger whatsoever." She wept often, perhaps too often. At one point, she sent chills through the courtroom as she described the attack. "I thought he was going to kill me," she said. Roy Black never broke her story.

Patricia Bowman's strong showing made it mandatory for William Smith himself to take the stand, in order to give his own version of the events of March 30. Prior to Smith's appearance, Roy Black addressed the court. "We want to call Mr. Smith as a witness, but we want to make sure the state can't open the door on cross-examination and enter evidence the court has ruled as irrelevant." He was talking about the three other women, whose nonpresence had hovered over the trial from the beginning. Lasch objected: "The truth of the defendant's statement cannot be offered in a vacuum. He can read a script, a prepared statement he's gone over. He knows exactly what questions will be asked, how to answer, and he's home free." Lupo ruled with the defense again. With the full assurance that nothing about the other women in his life could be asked, Smith took the stand. Like Bowman, he was a very good witness.

"How are you feeling now?" asked Roy Black.

"I'm very, very nervous, but I remember what you said to me, tell the truth and I will be fine." And he was. Better than fine. His version of the night differed markedly from hers. He became a passive participant. She picked *him* up at Au Bar. She unbuttoned his trousers. She massaged him. She helped him enter her. Once, he corrected his lawyer on the term "act of love." Smith called it, simply, sex. Bowman had spoken of one act of violence. He spoke of two acts of sex. He said that when he called Bowman Cathie by mistake she became furious and told him to get off her.

Around midnight of the day that William Kennedy Smith took the stand, the telephone rang in my room at the Brazilian Court Hotel in Palm Beach. I had just gone to sleep. A woman who said she could not identify herself was on the other end. "I saw you in court. I knew who you were," she said. For a moment I thought she was a Kennedy relation. She spoke to me for several minutes about Smith's testimony of that day. It was not until she said "He'll never let me alone—I saw that today" that I realized my midnight caller was Patricia Bowman.

"Will you let me talk to you?" I asked.

"I can't decide anything until after this is over," she replied. Our conversation was ended.

"They say that gratitude is the memory of the heart," Willie Smith began his final speech to the crowd outside the courthouse after his acquittal. The quote, which did not have the ring of being off the top of his head, was from Jean Baptiste Massieu, a nineteenth-century teacher of deaf-mutes. He continued, "And I have enough memories in my heart to last a lifetime. I want to say thank you most of all to my mother. I don't think it's possible for a child ever to repay the debt they owe their parents. I only hope I can be as good a parent to my children as my mother has been to me." His beaming family looked on proudly, as if he had won an election rather than an acquittal. The victory party at the compound was simple, according to all reports: pretzels, beer, and pizza. Barbara Gamarekian, talking from the mansion that night, said of Willie, "He's just walking around with a big grin on his face."

Intoxicated with his triumph, Roy Black went on numerous television programs, even appearing on *A Current Affair*, the tabloid show he had trashed so mercilessly throughout the trial, and clearly enjoyed his new national and international fame, which, prior to the trial, had been restricted to the South Florida arena. He infuriated counselors from rape crisis centers around the country by saying in *USA Today* about Smith, "The jury got a look at him. They saw he was articulate, well-spoken, the antithesis of a rapist"—as if all rapists looked like another Willie, Willie Horton. On a television show on which we both appeared the morning after the acquittal, Black told me that after the verdict he had gone to the Kennedy compound, where they, together with Charles O'Byrne, the Jesuit seminarian, had sat around in a circle, held hands, and "said a prayer for Patty," a story he repeated on several shows. It was difficult not to question the heartfeltness of such a prayer. If it actually took place, it would have been better left unmentioned, rather than bragged about, as it sounded pious and self-congratulatory. Having won, he continued to discredit Bowman on each program, casting doubts on her sanity by referring to her as troubled, disturbed, or mentally unstable.

Jupiter, Florida, is only forty minutes, but a thousand miles away, from Palm Beach. The houses, in a new development, are similar in style, a Florida-Mediterranean look, mostly beigy-pink in color, with tile roofs, priced in the $150,000-to-$175,000 range. There are hibiscus plants in the front yards, and palm trees. It is very much a community for young families; on a recent sunny weekend afternoon, neighbors were outside, mothers bringing in groceries, fathers playing catch with their sons, or polishing nice cars, or doing lawn work. "Don't step on the grass, Stacy," a mother called out to her daughter, about a just-seeded lawn. It is here that Patricia Bowman, the woman who brought a rape charge against William Kennedy Smith and lost, lives with her daughter, Caroline.

Bowman's house is on a corner lot about fifteen or twenty feet away from the house next to it. There is a small backyard, fenced in, with a multicolored child's slide the main object of interest. The house belongs to Bowman free and clear. It was a gift from her rich stepfather. Her stepfather, who has thirteen children of his own, also set up a trust fund for her which gives her an income of more than $20,000 a year. The single difference from the other houses in the neighborhood is the NO TRESPASSING sign in front. The sign was put up shortly after the now notorious Easter weekend, when members of the media began to camp out there, finally forcing her to abandon her home, hidden in the trunk of her mother's car, and retreat to the house of her mother and stepfather several miles away, behind the guarded gates of the Loxahatchee Country Club. She also spent several months at her parents' condominium in Akron, Ohio.

The previous morning I had visited Mr. and Mrs. O'Neil at their home and had lunch with Mrs. O'Neil at the country club, which overlooks a splendid Jack Nicklaus–designed golf course. Both O'Neils are avid golfers. Michael O'Neil, seventy, is called Jerry by everyone, although his stepdaughter, Patricia, calls him Boomer because of his loud, gravelly speaking voice. He is a tough-talking, nonsense kind of man. Sitting with him in the sun-room of the winter home he built in 1984, I asked him about the enormous number of children he had.

"Now wait just one damn minute," he said, pointing his finger at me and shaking it. "You're not here to interview me. You're here for me to interview you to see if we're going to let you talk to Patty."

He then asked me what the circulation of this magazine is. Unnerved by his brusqueness, at that moment I couldn't remember. "What the hell kind of writer is it who doesn't know the circulation of the magazine he writes for?" he asked.

Somehow we got past all that. "Patty's a terrific mother," he said finally. He talked for a long time about Patty's daughter, Caroline, and his gruff manner evaporated into grandfatherly delight.

"How do you feel about the outcome?" I asked, referring to the verdict.

"I'm goddamn mad, and I have a right to be," he answered.

The Verdict

"What do you think about the defense's applying to the state of Florida to assume some of Willie Smith's legal fees?"

"I'll be happy to pay $50,000 toward his defense fee if he takes a lie-detector test," answered Jerry O'Neil.

Jean O'Neil, who is his second wife, explained to me about the fourteen children. He and his first wife had seven children. When his first wife's sister died, he adopted her seven children, many of whom were the same age as his own children. Subsequently, one of them died. They lived in a huge red-brick Tudor house in Akron, Ohio. After O'Neil divorced his wife, he and Jean were married. Patty Bowman, who was Jean's only child from her first marriage, was nineteen at the time. O'Neil's first wife died shortly afterward. At the age of sixteen, each child in the family got a car. At one point, Jean O'Neil remembers, there were fifteen cars parked in the driveway. "We ate dinner at 6:30 every night," she said. "We all sat at the dinner table. It was family time. There were great discussions. Jerry spent a lot of time with those children."

On the day I went to Patricia Bowman's house in Jupiter, three days after the verdict, I gave a pre-arranged signal at her door: two short rings and one long. Inside, she was trimming a Christmas tree. Unlike Willie Smith, she was not walking around with a big grin on her face. She was dressed in a turquoise Ralph Lauren polo shirt and white shorts. She wore no makeup, and her hair was pulled back in a rubber band. "Do you want a Coke? I'm going to have one," she said, going into the kitchen. The books in her bookcase were not the sort of books I would have expected. Among them were novels by George Eliot, D. H. Lawrence, and Joseph Conrad, a volume of Proust, and a collection of the poems of Robert Frost. While she talked, her attention never strayed far from Caroline, her two-and-a-half-year-old daughter, who bears an uncanny resemblance to the film actress Goldie Hawn. The child, whose twin was lost in a miscarriage early in the pregnancy, was born ten weeks prematurely and weighed three pounds. Jean O'Neil had told me, "Patty loved that child to life." Bowman put on a video in an adjoining room for the little girl to watch, but it was not the video Caroline wanted to see, so she changed it.

"What made you decide to go public, after being so private?" I asked.

"I'm only giving two interviews—to you and to Diane Sawyer. The defense attorney Mr. Black was saying I was nuts and using my name on TV," she replied very matter-of-factly, as if no further reason was necessary. When she talks, she looks you right in the eye. "Besides, I felt the need to get out there and urge victims to prosecute, because it's part of the healing process." She told me that there had been 40 percent fewer reports of rape in that area since she made her charge. During Bowman's time on the stand, a woman reporter sitting next to me had whispered in my ear, "If I were ever raped, I'd never report it."

"What was it like when you heard the verdict?" I asked.

"I was having so many flashbacks. When he had me in that little room [in the Kennedy compound the night of the incident], and I told him that he raped me, and he looked at me, the calmest, smuggest, most arrogant man, and he said, 'No one will believe you.' And the jury came in and said, 'Not guilty,' and I was right back in that room with that man telling me no one would believe me."

"Have you talked with the other three women who were prepared to testify?"

"No. I don't even know their names. I've heard some of their first names."

"Did any of the three try to get in touch with you?"

"No. There is the legality of witness rules and things like that. I couldn't even talk to my rape counselors, who had helped me, because they were subpoenaed initially as witnesses." Bowman contacted Anne Seymour of the National Victim Center in Washington, D.C., after seeing her on the Oprah Winfrey show, and Seymour subsequently acted as her advocate in the weeks before and during the trial.

"At the time of the incident, the police, the prosecutors, the rape counselors, and the doctors who examined you believed your story."

"Yes."

"And you passed two polygraph tests and a voice-stress analysis."

"Yes."

"Then where did it all go wrong?"

"It's the acquittal that money can buy. They had nine months to come up with their story. . . . I had to give five statements. My deposition took three days—720-some pages—and there were three defense attorneys and two prosecutors and one of my attorneys. And this is over a period of eight months that I had to give these statements. . . . When did Willie ever give a statement? He had nine months. He had five of my statements and everybody else's statements. He had the forensic evidence. He had all kinds of resources, which they've already testified that they used. He had all this material with which to concoct a story. And that's what he did. He concocted a story. He fit every nook and cranny. Everything I couldn't remember, because of rape-trauma syndrome, he could come up with something for. Everything that fit in with the forensic evidence, he found an answer for it."

"Do you feel that Moira Lasch let you down?"

"Oh, no," she replied quickly. Neither she nor her father would hear any criticism of the prosecutor. "I admire her," she said over and over. "I was proud of her. Moira and I have formed quite a bond. I care a lot about her. She came to my parents' house on the night of the verdict with her husband. They call her the Ice Queen, but she cried, and I got hugged by her. She tried her best." Her affection and admiration for Lasch remained constant each time I talked to her. "I strongly believe that Judge Lupo couldn't stand her," she said.

"At what moment that night did he change, from being obviously a nice guy?"

"I had no fears about him. He asked if I wanted to go swimming. I can't swim. I've got stretch marks. I'm not about to do anything like that. . . . The water's freezing out there. I'm thinking, What does this guy want to go swimming for? And he started on his pants. And I thought, I just met this guy an hour or so ago. I don't necessarily want to see him in his boxer shorts. So I turned my back. I didn't see him totally undress. I just saw him working on his pants. I thought, Well, it's late, he's going swimming. I should go. I started going toward the stairs. And then my leg was grabbed. . . . I struggled to get away from him. That should be a sign to a normal rational person: Don't do this. He had been a nice man. And all of a sudden, this man has grabbed my leg. He's on top of me. He's hurting my body."

"You did not consent to sex?"

"I did not consent to any type of sexual activity with him. I kissed him. It was nothing big and romantic. I did not consider a kiss an invitation to rape me."

"Willie said he called you Cathie after sex."

"I never heard the word 'Cathie' until he said that in the courtroom. Look, if what he said was the truth, why didn't he come forward and tell the police all that? He waited until he had nine months to hear every word that came out of my mouth to concoct his story."

Later, at Caroline's request, she got a raspberry Popsicle out of the freezer for the child to eat while she watched the video.

When Caroline dropped the Popsicle and stained the front of her white dress with the red ice, Bowman changed her dress, all the time continuing to talk with me.

"I want a bath," said Caroline.

"I'll give you a bath later," she said. "I'm talking now. She loves baths."

"Tell me about Caroline's father," I said.

"Johnny and I have had difficult times in our relationship, but this experience, believe it or not, has been the breakthrough for him and me, and him and Caroline. It's wonderful to see the two of them together. Initially he wanted to come and take care of us, but I couldn't stand men being around me. I know that was hard on him. I never told the story to Johnny. I never told the story to anybody. I told it to the police and the rape counselor. I didn't want to talk about it. Everybody had read things, but they'd never really heard it from me, and he was quite distraught after he'd heard my testimony and watched me testify on TV. My testimony was quite traumatic on all my family. I have brothers and sisters, and they all had to see it, too. I can't imagine what Johnny goes through, just like I can't imagine what my dad goes through thinking about what happened to me. I know my mom is very fond of Johnny, because of his strides to be a good parent to Caroline, and to be a good mate, even though I'm not sure that we're at that stage. I think everybody's extremely proud of Johnny, and the strides he's made in accepting his parenthood."

"And Caroline?"

"My daughter knows something happened to her mommy. When they had me at my mom's house after the attack, and I was in real bad shape, and I couldn't take care of Caroline, my mom was taking care of Caroline, and my mom was calling me Patty, and my daughter stopped calling me mom. She called me Patty. That was hard. My daughter had never had sleeping problems, ever, in her entire life. All of a sudden she won't go to bed. She's up in the middle of the night, and I can't figure it out. One of my neighbors said I was screaming in the middle of the night from the nightmares, and my daughter's afraid."

"When you got pregnant, how did Boomer, as you call him, and Jean handle that? You not being married. Was it a problem?"

"As any parent would when a child comes home and says, 'I'm pregnant, I don't want to get married, I want to have the child,' they reacted normally. Out of concern—a strong concern for my health. For my future. And for the child's future. And said I had a lot of thinking to do. I think my dad at one time suggested I go to church. They just tried to support me. I know it had to have been hard for them."

"Was it difficult when the 'Dr. Dirt's got the information on you about the abortions? What was that like with your parents?"

"My mother and I are very close. I have confided everything in my life to my mother. She's well aware of...that was not shocking to her. Girls are different with their dads. And so, my dad has had an adjustment because of...of some of the true information, and I'm not going to tell what-all's true, but I would tell you that 80 percent of what they—the Dr. Dirts and the media—reported about me is wrong. But my family supports me. It's a different world now than it was for my parents, you know, and I try, I try my best, to be a good person, especially since I've become a parent. I'm adamant about trying my best, you know, to be a good Christian, and a good parent, and a good daughter. You know, that's my focus in life, to be the best I can, and I know that my mom and Boomer really saw the change in me during my pregnancy, and have stood by me 100 percent. I've got great parents. I've got one of the greatest mothers in the world. And Boomer. I remember one day getting a call from some kid—I was up at the family home—and he said, 'Is your dad there?' And I said, 'No. Can I take a message?' The kid gave me his name, and I said, 'What's this about?'—you know, because we were screening media calls. And he said, 'Oh, well, my tuition went up,' and my first thought is, Why the hell are you calling my dad about tuition? And my dad's putting some kid through college, you know—he's a generous man. He helps people. He has a foundation that helps people."

"What's going to happen to you?"

"On the day the verdict came in, I was a goner. I was practically catatonic. The next day was surreal. The past few days have been... I've gotten away from my family, you know, from the hovering, and I needed some time to myself, and I came home, and Caroline's toys were all over the floor. So I had to pick up the toys so I didn't step on them, and the laundry needed to be done, and so after a couple of hours I found myself doing normal things, and I felt kind of relieved. Hey, this is over. Maybe I can go back to a normal life.... And that's why I'm doing this interview. I'm standing up and saying, 'No, I am not crazy. I am not a drug addict. I've never been treated for any drug problem. I've never been treated for any alcohol problem, because I've never had one. I'm not nuts. I'm not a prostitute. I'm not promiscuous.' I have a small child. I have a life, a beautiful, full life that was tampered with, that a man tried to destroy on March 30, and that a group of men tried to destroy after that through the criminal process. But they haven't destroyed me. I'm a survivor. And I will stand up each and every time and say, 'What you did to me was wrong.'

"Every woman has the right to stand up for herself—especially if they're victimized. And no matter what it takes, I will stand beside, behind, and with any victim who needs me. Any person who is persecuted. Because through the support I received, through the friendship, the understanding, the love, and God's will, I have gotten through this. And I will help anybody else to do it, too."

According to a spokesperson for the University of New Mexico School of Medicine, where Dr. Smith was to do his residency, he has not contacted them since his acquittal. They are waiting to discuss whether it would be in the best interests of Dr. Smith and the school to continue the relationship. Wherever he goes, William Smith is too famous now to retreat into medical oblivion. His victory was not unqualified. When his eloquent speech was over, he emerged from his ordeal with a blemished reputation. The dark cloud of the three other women hovered overhead. The admissibility of their statements was ruled against. They were unheard by the jury and most of the public. But they exist. They are. Their depositions are for sale, for anyone to read, at Sir Speedy, a photocopying service in West Palm Beach, for under fifty dollars, and every reporter on the case has read them. *Spy* magazine has announced it is investigating accounts by twenty women of their encounters with Smith. Other writers are obsessed with the three years in Smith's life between Duke University and Georgetown University School of Medicine.

The last time I spoke with Patricia Bowman by telephone, she had just come in from her postbox, where there was so much mail that her mother had to help her carry it. Even before her appearance on *PrimeTime Live* with Diane Sawyer, she had received thousands of letters, 90 percent of them favorable. There were also growing stacks of mail in the State Attorney's Office. "How do they know where to write to you?" I asked. "They just put 'Jupiter, Florida,' " she said. Patricia Bowman, in defeat, seemed undefeated. □

Robert Maxwell

(Continued from page 186) "He was obviously a guy whose persona was totally overtaken by his public image, by what he purported to be, which was a world-class billionaire tycoon," said one of his lawyers. "He was celebrity-mad. He'd cut short a business conference just to show you a picture of him shaking hands with Gorbachev."

Americans were impressed by his size, his plummy upper-class British accent, and his natural storyteller's wit. "He once told me a story about his meeting with Brezhnev," said John Campi, vice president of promotion for the *Daily News*. "Brezhnev asked him what would have happened if Khrushchev had been assassinated instead of Kennedy. And Maxwell replied, 'Well, one thing is for sure. Mr. Onassis would not have married Mrs. Khrushchev.' "

But while things appeared to be going swimmingly in America in the summer of 1991, they were fast falling apart in Britain. The *Financial Times* raised serious questions about the mysterious rise in the price of Maxwell Communications stock. The British Broadcasting Company's *Panorama* news program and *The Independent* newspaper launched separate investigations of Maxwell's finances. A lawyer for the pensioners of the Mirror Group began expressing concern about possible manipulations of the fund. Peter Walker, a former Tory Cabinet minister and well-connected business executive, announced that, after considering an offer to assume the chairmanship of Maxwell Communications, he had thought better of it. And Maxwell himself, having bet and lost millions in the foreign-exchange market, had to mortgage the Mirror newspaper buildings for $166 million.

"I had stayed on relatively good terms with him, despite my leaving his employ," said Peter Jay, his former chief of staff, "and one day he telephoned me about what he called his cold. This was in May or June. You know, he had had a lung removed in the mid-fifties, and he often suffered from pulmonary edema. I told him to take Benylin. It's a schoolboy cough mixture, an expectorant. He said thank you, and the word 'friend' came up. And suddenly he said, 'You're the only friend I have.' And I said, 'Bob, don't be ridiculous.' Old-fashioned English schoolboy that I am, if you take someone's check, it is not civilized or respectable, the moment you're out the door, to bad-mouth the guy. I didn't. And I suppose that explains why he called me his only friend. I was in no sense his friend."

Nor did another old-fashioned English schoolboy, Lord Donoughue, consider himself a friend, even when he worked for Maxwell as vice-chairman of London & Bishopsgate International Investment Management. According to Bernard Donoughue, who was a Labour peer, he began to complain vociferously about Maxwell's habit of lending out pension-fund stocks.

"His moods swung violently from beaming, relaxed confidence to surly, snarling aggression," Lord Donoughue told me. "In July, during a meeting in his study at Maxwell House, he accused me of betraying him, because I sided with those who complained about his stock lending. I said, 'The stock lending must stop.' He said, 'It's none of your fucking business. I'm chairman and I'm responsible.' I said, 'I have an obligation, too.' We also had a row about our trying to tell the pension-fund trustees what he was doing. And he said, again, 'It's none of your fucking business to tell the trustees. *I'm* the chairman of the trustees.'

"Most of our dealings were with Kevin, with whom my relations were usually courteous but grew increasingly distant," Lord Donoughue continued. "I saw Kevin on July 31, at a company meeting in Edinburgh, my last day with London & Bishopsgate. I had been scheduled to leave the previous December, and I was fed up with the whole bloody thing, because I didn't know what was going on. I didn't know what I didn't know. And Kevin and I had had words. Kevin normally never lost his temper. He had a kind of almost clinical control. Kevin could be mean, like his father. I was complaining about the stock-lending scheme, and about the people who were in charge.

"It was a gamble working for Maxwell," he went on. "I went to work for him because I was bored in the City, and although I believed he was a rogue and a pirate, I did not believe he was a crook. Now everybody is functioning on twenty-twenty hindsight, and they know what a crook he was. But the reality was that until about July or August people still found him fascinating."

It was at that time, in late summer, that Maxwell appeared frequently at London's casinos, playing three tables at once, dropping $2.5 million in a single night. For years he had been an inveterate gambler, but this was the behavior of a desperate man. He knew that time was running out. *The Wall Street Journal* was preparing a piece on his crumbling empire. Seymour Hersh, the American reporter, was bringing out a book on Israel's secret nuclear arsenal called *The Samson Option,* in which it was alleged that Maxwell had close ties to the Israeli intelligence service, Mossad.

"At the end of his life, Bob was no longer able to tackle very complicated problems with the same sharpness that he had displayed throughout his entire life," Betty Maxwell told me. "I think he was extremely tired, not only because of his business but because of all these attacks to which he was subjected. In England, they don't tolerate success."

Not everyone bought that explanation. "Betty is clearly going to live out a fantasy for the rest of her life that Robert was a good man, and they were all jealous of him for making so much money," said Roy Greenslade, a former editor of the *Daily Mirror,* whose tentatively titled *Maxwell's Fall: An Insider's Account* is scheduled for publication late this spring. "He fooled the world. Usually you can't fool those close to you. But Betty knew nothing about anything bad he did. They had lived separately for a long time."

"Maxwell never wanted Betty near him except when it was judicious to have her attend a dinner or send her to take his place at a charity function," said another former top executive at the *Mirror*. "Even when they shared the same hotel, she was put on a different floor."

However, many people found it implausible that a woman of Betty Maxwell's obvious intellect had remained in total ignorance of her husband's activities for nearly half a century. One businessman, for instance, recalled negotiating with Maxwell in his wife's presence; Bob, he said, would turn to Betty whenever the questions got knotty, and consult with her in French. "She may not have known all the details," said this businessman, "but I cannot believe that she did not have some idea of what he was up to."

In Maxwell's final days, his sons may have known that Götterdämmerung was lurking around the corner. By then, Maxwell was ordering huge transfers from the Mirror pension funds: the final tally was three-quarters of a billion dollars. Two weeks before his father's death, as money began to dry up, Ian Maxwell reportedly telephoned an acquaintance in Argentina and said, "It's every man for himself."

"Maxwell was increasingly paranoid," Ernest Burrington, the Mirror Group's deputy chairman, told me. To prove his point, Burrington gave me a tour of the executive suite, showing me where Maxwell had bugged the offices of his own

executives. The police had recently ripped out wall panels, uncovering the secret bugging equipment. "He was a naturally secretive man who was concerned about people telling tales about him," Burrington said. "I remember how concerned and jumpy the Maxwells were after the last board meeting. I was phoned by Ian Maxwell, who said, 'What is your finance man up to now? I'm told that after the board meeting he handed an envelope to one of the nonexecutive board directors. Don't you know that that envelope could include figures?' "

Before the boss left for his fateful cruise on his yacht, Burrington said he demanded an explanation from Maxwell for the mysterious disappearance of $83 million in Mirror funds, and Maxwell promised that he would discuss the matter with him when he returned. Maxwell also knew that Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte was scheduled to do its next audit of the pension fund in a couple of months, when it would surely discover the missing funds. One of his banks, the Swiss Bank Corporation, was threatening to go to the Serious Fraud Office and blow the whistle unless Maxwell delivered stock—stock he didn't legally control, because he had already sold it or pledged it as collateral to other creditors. What's more, Maxwell was informed by Kevin that Goldman, Sachs had dumped a vast block of Maxwell Communications stock on October 31, a sale which was to become public on November 5, and which would almost certainly set off a stampede by other sellers.

Joe Haines, Maxwell's confidant and official biographer, had lunch with him and a group of *Mirror* editors on October 31, six days before Maxwell died. "He was not crumbling under the pressure," the still-loyal Haines insisted. "He was relaxed. He was enjoying his food. He wanted to raise the price of the paper, but he accepted our objections."

His daughter Ghislaine visited him in his office before he flew off to Gibraltar. "He was looking for an apartment in New York—a sort of pied-à-terre, where he could talk and have meetings—and he wanted me to help him," she said. "He asked me to go see a particular apartment. He said, 'If you like it, I'll make time to see it and come to New York.' "

The next time Ghislaine saw her father, he was dead. His body had been spotted in the Atlantic Ocean—floating face up, its eyes wide open—by an air-sea helicopter rescue team from Gando airport. At first, the crew harnessed Maxwell to the end of a winch and tried to raise him out of the water. But he was too heavy, and the effort may have left abrasions on his skin and torn muscle tissue in his shoulder and back, which were later discovered during an autopsy. Ultimately, the rescue team had to lower a stretcher and tie the body to that.

Photographs and fingerprints were taken, and when Betty Maxwell arrived, she was asked to identify the body. She looked down at the remains of her sixty-eight-year-old husband and nodded her head. "His face was totally smooth and serene," she later told a close friend, contradicting speculation that he had been beaten and had his nose broken. "He looked more handsome than at any time in recent years." Her son Philip covered his face with his hand.

By Wednesday, November 6, the family had hired a local Spanish lawyer, and Betty Maxwell was putting pressure on him to get her husband's body released so that it could be buried, according to Jewish ritual, as quickly as possible. Maxwell had made plans to be interred in a grave on the Mount of Olives, overlooking the Old City of Jerusalem. The Mount of Olives was more than a place of honor; according to Jewish tradition, its graves would be opened before any others by God on Judgment Day. Betty was eager to have Maxwell's body flown to Israel and turned over to the religious authorities before sundown on Friday, the start of the Jewish Sabbath.

Under this pressure, Spanish pathologists worked feverishly through the day and night to eviscerate and embalm Maxwell's body. They placed his body parts—heart, lungs, liver, and other internal organs—in three ice chests, and shipped them off to Madrid for a postmortem. They then issued a death certificate, declaring that Maxwell had died of "heart and lung failure." (A later, equally inconclusive Spanish autopsy report cited heart disease and drowning as possible contributing factors.)

Because of his great bulk, Maxwell's massive coffin would not fit through the door of his private Gulfstream IV, so a larger jet was chartered in Switzerland. By the time Betty Maxwell arrived in Israel on Friday with the body, the world press was aflame with speculation about a possible cover-up of the real cause of Maxwell's death. Dr. Iain West, an eminent British pathologist appointed by the insurers of the Lloyd's of London syndicate, flew to Israel to conduct his own postmortem at the L. Greenberg Institute of Forensic Medicine, which is affiliated with the Sackler School of Medicine at Tel Aviv University. He was assisted by his wife, Dr. Vesna Djurovic, who is also a physician, and three Israeli pathologists. Afterward, West proceeded to Madrid to haggle with the Spaniards until they finally let him examine Maxwell's body parts, and to study their five-hundred-page autopsy report.

Most people in Britain were convinced that Maxwell had taken his own life. "He realized things were coming to a thunderous conclusion, and he finally confronted his own mortality," said Peter Thompson, the co-author, along with Anthony Delano, of *Maxwell: A Portrait of Power*. Roy Greenslade agreed. "He knew he faced jail, and he decided to jump." "I've known him for twenty-five years," said Nigel Dempster, Britain's leading gossip columnist, "and what he couldn't stand was ridicule and being exposed. He had treated people abominably, and if he lived, everybody would have been at him. I think he caused his own death by inducing a heart attack by thrashing around in the water."

Tom Bower, the author of *Maxwell: The Outsider* and the acknowledged expert on the man, didn't see it that way. "The only thing the pathologists knew for certain," he said, "is that Maxwell had taken some seasick tablets and vomited at some stage before he went into the water. The suicide theory depends on his jumping into the water while conscious."

Many of Maxwell's friends and associates rejected suicide outright. Maxwell, they said, had wriggled out of far worse fixes before. "Suicide is the last thing a traditional Jew would do," said Arthur Schneier, a prominent New York rabbi. "People who commit suicide are considered outcasts. Mourning is not permitted for them. They must not be buried in that part of a Jewish cemetery that consists of hallowed ground."

In the opinion of those familiar with the contents of the autopsy conducted by Dr. West, the mystery surrounding Maxwell's death would be swept away by the eventual release of the official Israeli postmortem and Dr. West's report. Those people pointed out that the bloodstains, discoloration, and injuries found on Maxwell's body by the pathologists in Tel Aviv were all probably caused by the rough handling of his body *after* he died and by the postmortem evisceration in Spain.

The Israeli report, which ran to about fifteen pages and was written in English, said that, in the opinion of the pathologists, Maxwell's death was most probably caused by drowning. It went on to assert that the examination of the body indicated a compatibility with an involuntary fall into the sea, and that there were blunt injuries on the body, caused prior to death. Betty Maxwell herself told me the report

concluded that her husband was alive when he fell into the water. "They found he had large tears in his left shoulder that were concurrent with his hanging by his left arm to save himself," she said.

Another finding—compiled by the London station of the Central Intelligence Agency—added further credence to this interpretation, according to one source; it stated that Maxwell was not murdered, but rather fell into the water after suffering some kind of seizure, probably attributable to his bad heart.

Meanwhile, however, in the absence of any public statement, the Maxwell mystery only seemed to grow by the day. Rumors that he had been an agent of Mossad were fueled by his extraordinary funeral in Jerusalem, which was attended by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and practically the entire political and business establishments. No less a figure than Chaim Herzog, the president of the state of Israel, delivered the eulogy.

I asked Teddy Kollek, the mayor of Jerusalem and an old friend of mine, to explain to me why Maxwell had been accorded such an honor. "There are several explanations," Kollek said. "Herzog served with Maxwell in the same unit in the British Army at the end of World War II. Although Maxwell never gave much to charity, he did contribute to Herzog's president's fund, which is used to help people out. Maxwell also created a lot of connections in Russia to smooth the way for Jewish emigration. And he invested in Israel and made a big profit when he sold his businesses, and Israelis hoped that he would be seen as an example and attract other investors."

The report compiled by the C.I.A. station in London allegedly concluded that, although Maxwell had cooperated informally with Mossad by passing on information, he was not an agent. And Peter Jay, the former British ambassador, threw cold water on the theory that Maxwell had been a spy for Mossad—or for any other intelligence agency, for that matter. "Before I took the job with him," Jay told me, "I did, as any sensible member of the British establishment would have, what is called taking soundings. Speaking very privately, I said that I had been asked to take this employment with Robert Maxwell, and was giving serious thought to doing so. Was there anything I ought to know? Provided you're a person in whom they have confidence, they will find a way to discourage you if they think it's a bad idea. And in that sense, I got an all-clear.

"I was quite clear in my mind," he continued, "if any part of the British government service concerned with international affairs would have thought there was some reason of propriety, prudence, or loyalty, as a former ambassador, I would have gotten the appropriate signal not to take the employment. And, I repeat, I did not. . . . I find it inconceivable that Mossad, with its awesome reputation for efficiency and ruthlessness, would want to have anything to do with this crazy guy, who never took guidance from anybody. What explains the quasi–state funeral they gave him? Money! He *bought* the bloody plot on the Mount of Olives."

"When Maxwell turned sixty," recalled Robert Hodes, co-chairman of the law firm Willkie Farr & Gallagher, "Betty wanted to produce a Festschrift, or holiday book, and she wrote hundreds of people throughout the world, including people such as myself, who had been on the other side of battles against her husband. I, for instance, had represented Saul Steinberg in the famous Pergamon case in the late sixties and early seventies that almost destroyed Maxwell. Betty wrote something like 'I know you were his enemy for a number of years and saw the worst in him, but I have reason to believe that you never hated him. Is there something you can say to include in the Festschrift?'

"Now, all my pals refused her request," continued Hodes, "but I wrote a brief thing, saying that what always had impressed me about Bob Maxwell was his extraordinary care and affection for his family. He really seemed to be someone devoted in an old-fashioned and traditional way to a family, not the way I've seen with other tycoons and their families."

What made Hodes's recollection so poignant was that it now appeared that Maxwell had destroyed his family, and, in particular, had victimized Kevin and Ian. For within less than a month of their father's funeral, Kevin and Ian Maxwell were fighting for their lives. They were forced to resign all their directorships in the public companies. Their assets were frozen. Kevin's house was put up for sale, as were the *Lady Ghislaine* and the Gulfstream IV. Their passports were seized. They were hauled before a parliamentary committee, where they refused to testify on the ground that it might incriminate them. And Kevin, the son of a onetime billionaire, was placed by a judge on short rations—receiving an allowance of $2,650 a week.

Investigations were under way to discover if they had aided their father in his illegal diversion of resources. In London, the *Financial Times* claimed that Kevin and Ian had, in fact, authorized loans and transfers of funds from the Mirror Group pension funds to the private companies. In America, more than one informed source told me that the brothers had also continued to shuffle around Berlitz stock even after their father was gone. "No one is ever reconciled to going to jail, but Kevin has certainly accepted the strong possibility that he will go to jail," said a banker who had been on intimate terms with the Maxwells, and who had talked to Kevin in the weeks after his father's death.

This, then, was the final Maxwell mystery: How could a man who was so devoted to his family ensnare his own flesh and blood in his illegal acts? And why had his sons apparently allowed themselves to become involved?

The answers to both of those questions lay in the psychological hold that Maxwell exercised over his children. Of all seven, Philip, it seemed, had suffered the most. "He suffered a nervous breakdown at one stage of his life," said Roy Greenslade, the former *Mirror* editor. "He went off to Argentina in the late seventies, and while he was there, he met a woman named Nilda, who had a child, and they fell in love, and he married her. Maxwell was incredibly enraged, and a massive argument began. I saw Philip once in Maxwell's office, and he had tears in his eyes, and his face was pressed into his father's arms. I said, 'Philip, you're not looking too well,' but he wouldn't enter into any discussion."

A year after Philip was born, in 1950, Betty Maxwell gave birth to twin girls—Christine and Isabel. "Isabel," said Greenslade, "had had a very unhappy marriage, and then she got married last Christmas. Maxwell didn't go to the wedding. It was typical of him, failing to turn up even for his child's wedding. I said to him, 'I see you didn't turn up for her wedding,' and he said, 'I meant to, but, after all, it was her second.' "

"Bob was, in a way, hard on his children," Betty Maxwell conceded. "When they were growing up, they asked me how should they deal with Dad. I would say to Bob, 'Would you consider this angle or that angle?' I would never be disloyal by saying to the children, 'Daddy's wrong.' If he was angry, I wouldn't permit them to play one parent off against the other."

And it was his monumental anger—an anger that had burned deeply within him since the day he had cut off his *payess* in his native Czech *shtetl*—that he used to

control his sons. "However bad it was for those of us who worked for him," said Susan Heilbron, who was employed for a brief time in America as vice president and general counsel at the Maxwell Macmillan Group, "it was worse for the children. Maxwell would get Kevin on the speakerphone, and, in front of everybody else, he'd scream at him and berate him, using the foulest language."

"No one can understand the enormous pressure he put his sons under," said Nick Davies, who was fired last fall as foreign editor of the *Daily Mirror* when he was accused of running guns for Israel (a charge he denied) and lying about his meeting with an American arms dealer. "He bullied them. He castigated them. He told them they were no good, to fuck off. When he said 'Sign,' they signed!"

"His sons were in mortal fear of their father," said Maxwell biographer Peter Thompson. "Mike Molloy, the [former] editor of the *Mirror*, used to have a seven-card-stud game in the office after work. It started at eleven o'clock at night. Ian joined it. We proceeded to take a lot of money off of Ian. He lost all his money and had to write a check. 'Please don't tell my father—I don't want him to know about this,' Ian told us. He couldn't be seen by his father as a loser. They were Maxwells, and the boys had to live up to their father's image."

Ian, Kevin, and Ghislaine were born within five years of one another, played together as children, and remained very close. Their bond was strengthened by their mutual hatred of Jean Baddeley, the woman who for more than twenty years was closest to their father. Until the mid-eighties, Jean Baddeley was Maxwell's personal assistant, office manager, and traveling companion. "She totally sacrificed herself to Maxwell," said Nick Davies, "and she was hated for it by the children of his marriage, because they felt this woman was taking away their father."

"I cannot overstate his personal control over his children," said one of his attorneys. "But the boys didn't really know what was going on. Until about a year ago, Bob had compartmentalized his family. But when he perceived that everything was falling apart, he did what desperate men do—anything to stay alive."

Yet there was no doubt that his sons still loved him. "Ian phoned me after Bob died to find out how I was feeling," Joe Haines recalled. "He said to me, 'Bob's left us in a hell of a mess. But he's still my father.' "

The one hit hardest by his death was Ghislaine, who recently turned thirty. I visited her in her New York apartment shortly before Christmas. She was dressed in a pair of jeans and a loose shirt, and she wasn't wearing any makeup. The floor was strewn with newspaper clippings about her father. Hundreds of letters of condolence lay on her desk, along with boxes of cards of acknowledgment waiting to be sent in reply.

I did not recognize in Ghislaine Maxwell the young woman her friends had described to me—the racy, glamorous social flibbertigibbet whom George Hamilton had escorted to the Ever Ready Derby in England and skied with in Aspen, who had attended the Kerry Kennedy–Andrew Cuomo wedding, and who had once instructed her father's pilot to put his helicopter into a free-fall to scare her fellow passenger.

"He wasn't a crook," she told me. "A thief to me is somebody who steals money. Do I think that my father did that? No. I don't know what he did. Obviously, something happened. Did he put it in his own pocket? Did he run off with the money? No. And that's my definition of a crook.

"I'm surviving—just," she went on. "But I can't just die quietly in a corner. I have to believe that something good will come out of this mess. It's sad for my mother. It's sad to have lost my dad. It's sad for my brothers. But I would say we'll be back. Watch this space." □

The Lost Boy

(Continued from page 166) Quentin, Halston, and everybody."

Quentin is Quentin Yearby, a handsome black New Orleanian who is the colleague and housemate of lingerie designer Fernando Sanchez. "He started running with Beverly and I," Yearby says, "Beverly, Iman, Grace [Jones]—whoever was Who's Who in the black world in New York, Mike would be introduced to. We would go to Nell's, we would go to Mr. Chow, we would go to restaurants. . . . He was shy, very shy. . . and he got everything that he wanted. Everything was paid for, usually. People would gather around the table—it was definitely amusing.

"I thought, He's not a dumb boxer. His Michael Jackson voice—because that's what we used to call him, 'Michael Jackson'—his Michael Jackson little voice, I found it, as the French would say, very *sympathique*. Here's a boxer who devastates people in the ring and has this tiny little voice. I thought it was the cutest thing I'd ever seen in my life. . . . I actually thought he was like a teddy bear, a child. I thought he was an ill-mannered child, and that he needed some guidance. He needed to meet the right people."

Tyson was like a kid in a candy store, suddenly meeting the beautiful women he'd seen on magazine covers, always pestering Yearby for introductions, which were readily provided ("He called me 'Madame Quentin,' " Yearby says). Tyson's managers thought the kid's new friends were good for him, uplifting somehow, and it seemed that Tyson had at last separated himself forever from the streets of Brooklyn.

"I remember we'd all be eating at Mr. Chow," Johnson says. "He was chewing food and he'd open his mouth and show everybody, and everybody was laughing, and I thought it was disgusting. I'd say, 'Close your mouth, and don't act like that.' But they all thought he was fun and amusing. . . . You know, we got him to take all the excessive jewelry off. And Quentin and Fernando and Halston would say to him, 'Oh no, darling, you can't wear that, you have to wear *this!*' He'd come to the fashion shows, and it was all new for him, and he loved it."

Grace Jones remembers meeting the young fighter over at Fernando and Quentin's apartment in the Osborne building on West Fifty-seventh Street, and thinking how naïve he seemed among that crowd. "He said he'd dreamt of meeting me since he was fourteen. He was very nice, very boyish, you know?"

There is a story from this period of Tyson's life, when he was newly champion and newly rich, that reveals the volatility in his brand of charm, the fine line between "amusing" and dangerous that exists in him. It has to do with the night Tyson met one of the great romances of his bachelorhood, the model Naomi Campbell, who was about to become, in her world, every bit the superstar that Tyson was in his.

The occasion was the birthday bash that Fernando Sanchez throws every year for Yearby, and all of Tyson's new crowd was there, fifty or sixty people in all. It was quite a scene, all those glitter guests crowded into Sanchez's elegant three-

story apartment, with its half-dozen parrots flying about. But, for Tyson, there was only one other partygoer—Naomi Campbell.

The young model was still just a girl, only seventeen and freshly arrived from London, but Tyson had seen her pictures and had begged Yearby for an introduction. "I said, 'She's a lady, you can't treat her like you treat those other girls,' " Quentin recalls. When Campbell arrived at the party with model Linda Evangelista, Tyson, dressed in a tuxedo, was hiding behind the door. "I had seen pictures of him," says Campbell, "but I wasn't prepared for his enormous size."

What happened that night, as in many instances of Tyson's relations with women, is open to interpretation, but several people who attended the party recollect Tyson's pursuit of Campbell as something between aggressive flirtation and sexual assault.

What they remember is that Campbell and Tyson spent much of the evening on a leather couch in an upstairs sitting room, she "flatly making eyes" at Tyson, one guest recalls, and Tyson being driven to distraction by it. And every now and then through the din of the main party below would come a shrill yelp of distress, whereupon her girlfriends would rush upstairs to separate them.

After two or three of these episodes, there came a more urgent squeal, but this time the rescue run upstairs didn't succeed in cooling Tyson's passion. "We couldn't make him let go, and she was screaming and he was pressing her against the wall, her arms up in the air," says one of the rescuers. At that point, the late, great Sir Freddy Ayer, seventy-seven years old and thoroughly English, ventured over to Tyson, tapped him on the shoulder, and said, "Unhand that girl!" Tyson whirled around and, confronted by the unexpected countenance, said, "Who in the hell are you?" To which Sir Freddy replied, "I am the most eminent philosopher of the twentieth century. Who are you?"

Sir Freddy's intervention bought a temporary peace, but toward the evening's end, one last episode occurred. Again the obliging rescuers followed the cries, which emanated this time from a downstairs bathroom. "She was screaming and we were banging on the door, saying, 'Open up! Open up!' and the door was not opening," recalls one rescuer. "We said, 'Mike, you've got to let her out, she's seventeen years old, she doesn't know what she's doing to you!' "

Recalling the entire evening's antics, Yearby comments about Naomi, "Drama queen to death! To death! I don't think anything really happened, but she was very young, and Mike is very forceful." Yearby was one of those who calmed Tyson down, saying through the door, "Leave her alone, Mike, leave her alone."

Both he and Sir Freddy were repaid for their trouble. As Yearby accompanied Ayer and Tyson to the street, Tyson began joking around with the professor and Yearby on the elevator, slap boxing them, "punishing" them for keeping him from his destiny with Naomi. One of his punches connected with Yearby, knocking him to the floor. "I thought I was gonna die," he says. "We were talking about Naomi, and he hit me, and I fell on the elevator floor. I think he only was playing with me. I play rough with guys, and he's very macho, so his slap was, like, I don't know, maybe he thought he was playing. I thought the professor was gonna have a heart attack, so I immediately got up. But I was really suffering."

Campbell herself says of that night that Tyson was "chasing me all over the room, like, 'Can I sit next to you? Can I talk to you?' and finally I said, 'O.K., you can sit next to me, you can talk to me.' I was a little nervous of him. You know, in appearance, he's big and everything." She adds that "he didn't hurt me in any way, ever, in our whole relationship." In fact, she and Tyson soon began seeing each other and were an item, off and on, for a year and a half.

Tyson's education in the matter of women was, at best, a confusing one. He'd known only an alcoholic mother, childhood on the streets, reform school, and an adolescence in a boys' fighting camp. "Basically, he had a ghetto mentality when it came to women," says Beverly Johnson. "That's all he knew. And in that whole boxing world, with that old-style kind of pimp mentality—'The woman will destroy you, the woman will only want your sexuality, she will be the destruction of you'—that was his lesson."

Now that he had money and celebrity, women, beautiful women, were everywhere around him, and available. And there was more to Tyson's appeal than simply fame. HBO picked up on Tyson's allure for the female audience and did a feature: two models spoke of his magnetism, and then there was the writer Joyce Carol Oates, whose essays on boxing had already revealed an admiration for Tyson that hinted of infatuation—academically speaking, of course.

"The quality of Tyson's fighting—one might say of Tyson's being—is profound," Oates had written. And: "His intelligence expresses itself obliquely, as if through a mask." "He is a young man gifted with a highly refined sense of irony." "Because he is an unusually sensitive person—sensitive to others' emotions, not merely to his own—he does not want to be forced to expend himself in feeling, or in thinking, except of course on his own terms." (This Oatesian riff was by way of explaining Tyson's laconic conversation style, and his leanings in matters cultural—cartoons and karate movies.) When she wanted to talk to Tyson about his rival heavyweights, he shrugged her off; he was right to do so, she wrote, adding, "I am reminded of a diary entry of Virginia Woolf's to the effect that she did not dare read her serious rivals. 'No creative writer can swallow another contemporary. The reception of living work is too coarse and partial if you're doing the same thing yourself.' "

Other women were more overt in expressing their attraction. "When I was with Mike," recalls Naomi Campbell, "girls, they don't care if you're going out with a person, they're still going to throw themselves on that person. Women used to do it in front of me, women used to go up and, like, grab him and kiss him in front of me. And he used to say, 'That's my girlfriend sitting there!' And they'd say, 'We don't care.'

"I wasn't there in Indianapolis," Campbell continues, "but when we were in Las Vegas, girls were hanging downstairs, or fighting their way up to get into his room. People used to be knocking on the door any time of night they wanted to."

Camille Ewald, the Ukrainian immigrant who raised Tyson after he moved into D'Amato's boardinghouse, still watches the parade of Tyson's girlfriends, whom he brings home to Catskill regularly. "Well, a lot of girls, I think they try to destroy him," she worries. "I think they're hungry. They're hungry for the man. They want him to approach them or maybe they want Mike to take them out."

From the start Tyson's response to this windfall was, basically, to dig in and enjoy. When he was living with his assistant trainer, Steve Lott, and one of his dates seemed disinclined to sleep with him, he'd wink at Lott, tell the girl he had to train, and she'd be escorted down to a taxi; there was always another girl waiting in line. When José Torres was researching

a book on Tyson (whom he'd known since Tyson moved in with Cus D'Amato as a boy), Rory Holloway recounted some of Tyson's prodigious sexual escapades, including the orgy with twenty-four women in Philadelphia.

"He was fucking girls like this: 'Come here, it's your turn...Now it's yours ...Next!' " Holloway recounted. "We had the house full of bitches. We stayed all day long fucking, from five in the afternoon till one o'clock in the morning."

Beverly Johnson well remembers what she calls Tyson's "promiscuous period," and how she tried to urge caution, if not restraint, upon her young friend.

"Women were always after him. And I remember one day he came over and he was going on [about his conquests]. He said, 'I don't care what happens to me,' and I said, 'Mike, there is a plague going on, a plague!'...He said, 'I've had six girls already tonight.' And I just said, 'Mike!' And I gave him a huge box of condoms. I thought I was gonna just shock this kid, right? And you know what he said? He just gave me a kiss and said, 'Don't worry about me,' and he was gone."

He took the condoms with him. Whether he used them or not is another question. When Tyson was in Las Vegas training for a title fight, he pulled down his pants and showed Steve Lott an infection from a venereal disease. Lott says that both he and a doctor tried to persuade Tyson to use protection if he insisted on promiscuity.

It has been suggested that such behavior has at its root a certain contempt for women; Tyson has certainly been accused of that. Torres quoted Tyson as saying, "I like to hurt women when I make love to them. I like to hear them scream with pain, to see them bleed." (Tyson now denies ever having said this.) After pummeling Tyrell Biggs with body blows in the third round of a fight that Tyson easily won, he described the punishment this way: "When I was hitting him with punches to the body, he was making noises. It was somewhat like a woman screaming."

Steve Lott thinks that Mike exaggerates his sexual escapades, including the remarks about inflicting pain. But, when Tyson was living with him in New York, didn't Lott awaken one morning to the screams of Robin Givens in the next room—resulting, she claimed, from a Tyson beating? "Well, Robin Givens," Lott says, pronouncing the name with scorn, "you have to set her aside."

The suddenness of Tyson and Givens's wedding, on February 7, 1988, was a surprise to almost everyone close to the fighter, including his managers, Jim Jacobs and Bill Cayton. It was a surprise, too, to Naomi Campbell, who'd been with Tyson a few days before: "I read about it in the paper, just like everyone else." It seemed, at first, like a storybook pairing—the beautiful and educated young actress, the smitten warrior—but the only storybook it turned out to resemble was something by Stephen King.

The marriage endured for just eight months, but it was a thrill a minute while it lasted. As was amply recorded at the time, Givens and her mother, Ruth Roper—"I do come with a package," Givens said without embarrassment—rearranged Tyson's life much in the manner that a tornado rearranges the furniture inside a mobile home, but with less grace. Suffice it to say that they separated Tyson from most of his friends, they separated him from the management team that had made him rich and secure, and they separated him from large amounts of money—$4.2 million in cash for a neo-Gothic mansion in Bernardsville, New Jersey, that Ruth settled on while Tyson was out of the country; fortunes in gifts, such as an $85,000 BMW for Ruth, a $2 million check written to Robin, by Robin, on one of the joint accounts mother and daughter had persuaded Mike to open; and so on.

Robin and Ruth also brought Donald Trump, always a useful element in a troubled marriage, into the mix, and Trump brought lawyers and P.R. men. Soon there were the press leaks about Mike's being manic-depressive and suicidal (and off-the-record hints that he was a wife abuser as well). Tyson's new bride and mother-in-law apparently got the manic-depressive assessment before the doctor ever saw Tyson, as well as prescriptions for Thorazine and lithium. For months, Tyson stood by the two women, publicly defending them and, despite his disdain for medication, even swallowing the pills they provided.

Tyson's friends and fight team were heartsick, but they were also helpless; the fighter would simply brook no complaint about the two ladies, whose class, he said at the time, he hoped would "rub off on me." Then came the dénouement.

Barbara Walters, a pal of Donald Trump's, landed an interview with Tyson and his mother-in-law for *20/20*. After the taping, as Walters and her crew were about to leave, Givens told Walters that she hadn't yet gotten the complete story. Walters rolled the cameras again, this time with Givens (who'd gotten a Zoli makeover for the occasion, on Mike's dime) and Tyson. She was prepared for her moment. "It's been torture," Givens said coolly. "It's been pure hell. It's been worse than anything I could possibly imagine."

As her husband, dopey with drugs, sat submissively by her side on a designer couch in the Bernardsville mansion, Givens went on to say that Tyson was a manic-depressive, that she lived in terror, that if it weren't for her and her mother, he would surely have "killed himself, or hurt somebody else."

"Just knowing him, I knew that wasn't true," says Naomi Campbell. "I cried when I saw him on Barbara Walters. I was filming *The Cosby Show*, and we finished shooting, and the television came on, and everyone just kind of sat there and watched it. I remember I looked at Bill with tears and just started crying. I felt very sad for Mike at that point."

"I'm making a movie with Robin right now; I probably ought to be careful what I say," says Grace Jones, "but I can only tell you I felt very sorry for him."

The good news for Tyson was that his wife emerged from that episode as the poster girl for Poisonous Women. When they filed for divorce, Chicago television station WBBM conducted a poll that found 97 percent of its respondents thought Givens didn't deserve a financial settlement from her husband. Suddenly, much of the heat generated about Tyson, the suggestions of suicide and psychosis, was muted, even the public opprobrium regarding wife abuse.

Steve Lott, who was fired as Tyson's training-camp manager thanks to Givens and Roper, says of Robin's allegations that Tyson beat her, "I'd say, 'You don't know Robin.'... I don't know how Mike had the discipline to be with her and *not* beat her up all the time. If you were with her, you would have shot her four years ago.... Mike showed discipline and respect and everything he could. But she was an actress." It is an unacceptable view, perhaps, yet one shared almost uniformly by those of Tyson's friends who knew him before Robin.

The marriage was not a great career move for Givens, earning her a place in Eddie Murphy jokes and the reputation of a shrewish Delilah. Still, she went on to make *A Rage in Harlem*, and *Boomerang*, the movie with Grace Jones, and Murphy (each a Tyson supporter in the marital war), is scheduled to open in June. Givens's manager, Barbara Stark, says she and her mother avoid any mention of Mike Tyson: "That's a chapter that is closed now, and

Robin just wants to leave it alone."

But for Tyson the time with Givens wasn't simply a bad marriage to the wrong woman; it was one of those landscape-altering seismic events that put his life on a new, separate course—though not necessarily a smooth one. For one thing, it led him to Don King.

It is cold and raining ice in Chicago when Mike Tyson, Don King, and their entourage arrive, but they have brought their own heat with them, in the form of fire and brimstone.

Tyson and King are on a Christmastime mission of mercy, dispensing toys to tots and turkeys to the poor of Chicago's blighted and mostly black South Side. Traveling with them on "the Turkey Tour," as King has named it, are some of the totems of black culture, credentialed in the Movement and at the pulpit, who have joined the entourage to shout the praises of these two beleaguered men of God.

"I'm from the streets," shouts the Reverend Hosea Williams, one of Martin Luther King Jr.'s field generals in the hard struggles of the 1960s. "I got a Ph.D. in streetology. And we went out to this housing project and all these little kids come runnin' out, they done saw Mike Tyson and acted like they was crazy. I said, 'Hey, hey, wait a minute, let's line up!' Mike Tyson said, 'Reverend Williams, I like you, but don't stop them. Let 'em come on.' He said, 'Let them touch me. *Let 'em . . . touch me!* Don't you stop 'em, Hosea, let 'em come on!' . . . We gotta show our appreciation for men like Mike Tyson."

And then, exhorting the congregation to join in, Williams improvises a spiritual: "We love Mike Tyson, we love Mike Tyson, we love Mike Tyson in our hearrrts!"

The Reverend Al Sharpton, in from New York, has his turn, too, and he is on full burner extolling the virtues of Don King. "In New York, where Mike and I come from, out in the harbor, they have a Statue of Liberty. And she's there for all the immigrants to come, and she stretches forth her hand. But we didn't have a statue for us, because we didn't come on Ellis Island. They brought us in the hulls of ships against our will. We came through the back door! But now we have a Statue of Liberation, who stands to tell black folks that you can make it if you try! Who rose from nothing to something! From the guttermost to the uttermost! From disgrace to amazin' grace! Brother Don King!"

The platform of preachers and attendants provides the choral antiphony: *Yes! Preach it, Sharpton!*

"And the reason that they try to attack him is because he refuses to assimilate outta his community. He stands up for us as a beacon of light in darkness. He is under attack now because he has the nerve to take his boxing, to challenge the cable industry so that our children will have something positive on the satellite. And for that they try to say that he's with the Mob. He is with the mob—the same mob that dropped a baby in Bethlehem two thousand years ago!"

Yes, the mob, the mob!

"He's with the mob that marched with Martin Luther King and Hosea Williams in Alabama to make us free!"

The mob!

"He's with the mob that had Malcolm stand up and say, 'I'm a man, I'll do the best I can!' "

Sharpton! The mob!

"He's with the angelic mob, the black man's mob, the freedom mob—our champion Don King!"

This tour through Chicago, preceded by similar ones in L.A., New York, Washington, and elsewhere, is about giving 40,000 turkeys to the poor (although some, such as the prosecutor in Indianapolis, have suggested it's as much about pre-trial image building). But the subtext throughout this philanthropic pilgrimage is the persecution of Mike Tyson by white America. At nearly every stop, King and his traveling band of ministers drop heavily the implication that the real reason Mike Tyson ("the people's champion!") no longer holds his heavyweight title and is facing a criminal rap is, as King puts it, "would-be heroes for us, they kill 'em off right quick." At one point, King even brings the Devil into the conspiracy. Asked when Tyson might get a shot at titleholder Evander Holyfield, King replies, "That's a very good question. Right now, Satan is at work trying to find another way for Holyfield to escape," ignoring the fact that the scheduled November 8 meeting between the two was canceled by an injured Tyson.

"Mike Tyson is the people's champion," says the Reverend Jasper Williams to one crowd. "Whenever he gets into that ring to fight, he's gonna be fighting not just for Mike, he's gonna be fighting for all of us. Because we know we have in him someone who's going to reinvest in us and help us to help ourselves."

For his part, Tyson mostly sits through the speeches and exhortations seeming a bit bemused, even a little embarrassed at times, and when his turn comes to speak, he avoids the racial and political stuff, saying quietly that poverty is growing worse and that he's glad to help.

It is seamless, this latest reconstruction of Tyson as the race-conscious activist hero. And it has been suggested that his indoctrination may have something to do with King's ever tightening grip on the fighter. Clearly, he is still an unfinished work, but no doubt King will complete the transformation; Mike Tyson has been nothing in his young life if not impressionable.

And so in January, when Tyson received some news from the West Coast that was, on its face, a source of deep hurt and humiliation for the besieged fighter, it was important that the same news made Don King very happy.

Tyson's ugly split from Robin Givens did not endow him with a sense of caution regarding his romances, and he would soon find himself the father of two children by two different women. One of them, a Los Angeles woman named Natalie Fears, had a baby boy in May 1990 for whom Tyson happily accepted responsibility. He named the child D'Amato Kilrain Tyson—after Cus and a long-ago fighter Tyson admired—and in his way he played the part of the beaming papa. He posed for a Father's Day cover spread for *Jet* magazine and he appeared with the boy on television interviews. He also supported the kid with a monthly allowance of $5,000, and supplied gifts and additional cash to Fears.

Then, as Tyson's life was falling apart last year, Fears hired Marvin Mitchelson, the L.A. palimony specialist (who'd briefly represented Givens in the divorce), to file a suit, seeking an $11 million settlement.

The judge ordered routine blood tests—and to everyone's surprise the results showed that Mike Tyson is not the father of the little boy he's been supporting and bouncing on his knee for nearly two years. "He's humiliated and embarrassed," says King. "He's visibly shaken."

On the other hand, King adds, there is a bright side. "It was just like God stepped into the plan. He just stepped in, and intervened. . . . You can see now, from the indications and the signs, I think, that some type of divine experience is coming in on it." What made King so happy was the unbidden opportunity to portray Mike Tyson as once again the victim of a preying female. King planned a splashy press conference to proclaim that theme, just days before the trial, a move that was

aborted at the insistence of Tyson's criminal lawyers. Still, King was allowed to gloat about the development. "It says to us that all of them [Tyson's various female adversaries] are just taking advantage of Tyson. He's the victim, *he's the victim*."

This recasting of Mike Tyson as a victim may seem to stretch credibility. But the man called "Iron Mike" has always been the perfect clay, formed and re-formed as the Fates delivered him from one hand to the next. He was first a creation of the streets, a fatherless thug shaped by Brooklyn's hardest ghetto, Brownsville, where muggings and holdups and other street thrills earned him the juvenile version of hard time. When he landed at Cus D'Amato's door in Catskill, New York, at the age of thirteen—arriving in a youth-prison van—Tyson yielded wholly to the trainer's vision. D'Amato, a brilliant old eccentric who'd trained two world champions (Floyd Patterson and José Torres), saw in the young tough with the lightning hands one last chance at glory. Tyson had the innate ability to deliver punches with what Cus called "bad intentions to a vital area," and D'Amato instilled in Mike his particular philosophy, a discipline, really, that mixed boxing lore with homemade psychology.

Tyson proved a natural mimic, and by the time he came down from the Catskills to meet his fame, he sounded just like a version of Cus—indeed, that was part of his charm. While not at all expansive on most subjects, he would engage writers and others with precisely worded monologues about boxing technique and history, carefully observed nuances regarding the great pugilists, going back to Jack Dempsey and beyond. These arcane speeches made his fairy-tale evolution from street thug to world champ all the more engaging.

When Cus died in 1985, Tyson was nineteen years old and well on his way. The reins were picked up by D'Amato's partners, Jim Jacobs and Bill Cayton, New Yorkers who had subsidized Cus's development of Tyson almost from the beginning. Cayton, a reserved and businesslike man, was the deal-maker, winning unprecedented payouts and two TV contracts for Tyson before he'd even fought a top-ten contender; Jacobs was the front guy, meeting the press, tending to his fighter's psyche, covering his indiscretions. Most important, Jacobs replaced D'Amato as Tyson's father figure.

Under Jacobs and Cayton, Tyson's career progressed on schedule, his human cocoon essentially undisturbed—trainer Kevin Rooney in his corner, assistant trainer Steve Lott tending to the fighter's workout regimen, Camille Ewald always ready with a warm meal back at Cus's old place up in Catskill. Then, just six weeks after Tyson married Givens in 1988, Jim Jacobs died. He'd suffered for years from leukemia, though he'd kept the disease secret from almost everyone, including Tyson. His death hit the fighter hard. As he'd often done in times of stress, Mike said through tears that he didn't want to live, that he couldn't fight anymore, that this world was an unbearable place.

But the void Jacobs left was aggressively filled by Givens and Roper. "Robin and her mother were brilliant," says Lott. They worked to convince Tyson that Cayton, who was suspicious of the pair from the beginning and who carefully guarded Tyson's money, was in fact exploiting his young charge. Tyson, characteristically, danced to the music that was nearest him, turning his back on the group of people who had made him. He eventually filed a lawsuit, seeking to sever himself from Cayton.

By the time Tyson realized his error, the split with Cayton was pretty well complete. And waiting in the wings was Don King. He invited the wounded Tyson and John Horne to his plush manse outside Cleveland, with its swimming pool in the shape of a boxing glove. While the lads amused themselves with some local ladies, King took care of business. Having already secured Mike's finances against the retreating grasp of Givens and Roper, he set about the re-education of Mike Tyson, who until then had not been fully aware of his enslavement by preying whites. Tyson may have shown some resistance to such talk—white men had, after all, saved him from the street, trained him as a fighter, and made him rich through deft business deals on his behalf. But King had leverage: the last contract Tyson had signed with Cayton and Jacobs stipulated that should either of the partners die his interest in Tyson would pass on to the respective widow.

"They willing a nigger in 1988, just like they would in 1849, as part of the heirlooms of the family!" King says now, launching into a soliloquy that Tyson no doubt heard more than once. In the fall of 1988, Tyson signed on with King, and although a settlement was reached that technically left Cayton as his manager, King became Tyson's newest grand influence, and has for all intents and purposes run the fighter's career from that point.

King seems fully capable of controlling his young charge—he is a forceful personality, well known for establishing deep personal bonds with his fighters, with his Svengali charms and those monologues on racism. But stressing the importance of Tyson's autonomy was a central tactic in King's wooing the fighter away from Cayton—the notion of Tyson's manhood having primacy over all else. King points out that Mike can "walk anytime he gets ready," and in fact they have no long-term contractual obligation.

And, on the surface, there are signs of Tyson's independence. He has said that King works for him, not the other way around. There was word last spring after Tyson's comeback fight with Donovan "Razor" Ruddock—a difficult bout Tyson won—that he was angry when King immediately agreed to a rematch with Ruddock, rather than arrange the title fight Tyson so desperately wanted. (One possible reason for King's action was that he controlled the rights to another Ruddock fight, whereas a Tyson fight with Holyfield, the current heavyweight champion, belongs to one of King's archrivals—Holyfield promoter Dan Duva.) Tyson is even said to have been talking with Harold Smith, a West Coast promoter who served six years on an embezzling rap and is trying to make his way back into the fight game.

But closer inspection reveals that King is intimately involved in Mike's life, professionally and personally. Tyson, who once loathed being away from New York, now lives outside of Cleveland, near Don King's primary residence, in a house chosen by King and decorated by his wife, Henrietta. And Tyson's lead lawyer in the rape trial, Vincent Fuller, may be best known for having represented John Hinckley, but he also happens to be King's lawyer.

Then there is the matter of Tyson's money, the biggest pile ever accumulated by a fighter, upwards of $200 million. "The situation now is he spends his own money," King maintains. "If he got money, he got it; if he ain't got money, he got none. It's his money. You tell him what's right and wrong, you advise him, and he does what he wants to do. You can't emasculate people." One indication of King's "advice" regarding Tyson's finances can be seen in the dealings with Natalie Fears, Tyson's opponent in the palimony-paternity imbroglio. King is named in one of the suits Fears filed against Tyson, and some of the support payments she received from Tyson were written on the account of Don King Productions.

The Lost Boy

King has, of course, been a controversial figure since the moment he got into the game in 1972, straight out of Marion Correctional Institution in Ohio, where he'd done time on a manslaughter charge. As a local numbers boss in Cleveland, he'd confronted a numbers runner who'd held back bets, and beat him to death in the street. He appealed his murder conviction down to a manslaughter rap (having already escaped punishment for an earlier killing by pleading self-defense). In prison, King read philosophy and the Bible, anything he could get his hands on. He developed and honed his amazing vocabulary (the King's English, so to speak), and decided to go legit, more or less, when he got out.

Boxing, with its lax rules and its generous traditions regarding character, was tailor-made for King, and he soon dominated the sport, making millions by cornering name fighters and promoting their matches. Recognized as a brilliant businessman by even his most fevered detractors (who are legion), King has regularly been accused of having Mob ties ("Lies," King says), cheating his fighters, and generally subverting the sport. But, as King notes, he has made his fighters rich along the way, too. "Any way you do it, if you gave me $20 million, I don't care if you did it fairly, unfairly, any way you do it. . . . If you got a secret way to do this, and maybe it would not be what would titillate the fancy of the public, I accept that. I accept that, and I don't think no other American would *not* accept that."

And how has Tyson fared under King's aegis? He lost the heavyweight title to a nonentity named Buster Douglas, and he has been indicted on rape charges. King prefers to see the glass as being half full. "The only incident that ever happened since I been associated with Mike Tyson is this woman he got now in Indianapolis. This is the only incident."

When Tyson lost his title to Douglas in Tokyo in February 1990, he was only remotely the fighter he'd been under his old management. He was unprepared, out of shape, undertrained. Part of the reason Tyson lost the fight was doubtless that he had severed his last tie to the old days, firing trainer Kevin Rooney for publicly commenting on his personal troubles. It was a patently foolish move—one which King could have, and should have, prevented—but part of his mantra to the champ was that *Tyson was the boss,* and as such had the right to choose his own trainer. The trainers who worked Tyson's corner in the Douglas fight were basically ignored, anyway, as was most of the technique Cus D'Amato, Teddy Atlas, and Kevin Rooney had spent eight years drilling into Tyson.

As for the rape charges, many blame King for not having kept closer tabs on Tyson. "He just stood back and he didn't do anything," says Rooney. "He lets Tyson go there, he lets Tyson blow town in the middle of the night. It doesn't look good."

The fighter had just come off his second bout with Razor Ruddock, in Las Vegas, and was feeling bored when his old pal the Reverend Charles Williams invited him to come to the Indiana Black Expo. Being the boss, Tyson decided to go to Indianapolis.

The Indiana Black Expo is an annual festival celebrating black culture, featuring black artists, performers, athletes, and, in recent years, the Miss Black America Pageant. The pageant is a separate enterprise, but its proprietor, J. Morris Anderson, has found the association with Black Expo a useful means of getting free publicity for the pageant, as well as an added attraction for the contestants—a chance to rub elbows with the stars.

This year's revue included R & B singer Johnny Gill, army general Calvin Waller, actor Danny Glover, Lou Rawls, and the Reverend Jesse Jackson, who was there trying to scare up some dough for Operation PUSH. Mike Tyson was not a scheduled guest, and Anderson says he didn't know the fighter was coming.

When Tyson and Dale Edwards arrived in Indianapolis they were met by a limousine arranged for by Williams. Tyson spent the evening hanging out with rap singer B Angie B, who is an old friend, hitting a few local spots, drinking some champagne. He checked into the Canterbury Hotel at 2:15 A.M. The next day, he was awake and down in the lobby by noon, where he met Williams and Gill. According to J. Morris Anderson, Mike said he wanted to go meet some of the girls in the pageant, and he wanted to do it right now; Williams telephoned Anderson at the Omni Severin Hotel, across the street, where the pageant was headquartered, and told him that if he wanted some promotional spots with Mike Tyson he'd better do them now. Anderson says he protested that he needed more time to prepare, but then reluctantly agreed. "When Mike Tyson heard about the girls, allegedly, he wouldn't do anything until he saw them," he says. "So Reverend Williams accommodated him by bringing him to see us. We were not ready."

Noemi McKenzie, a contestant from Woburn, Massachusetts, has been quoted as saying that Tyson's arrival in the rehearsal hall was met with excitement by the girls, followed by shock when Tyson, wearing a "Together in Christ" button, "started touching us and rubbing up against us. . . . He acted as if he had walked into a room full of sluts." This was the first of two alleged buttocks-fondling sprees Tyson would be accused of indulging in that afternoon.

"I'm in a dream, day after day," Tyson sang in a promotional rap recorded at that session. "I see beautiful women, in such array." But, according to Williams, the visit was as smooth as could be. "Everything was fine, they all were happy, the hotel staff, the girls—everybody was just overwhelmed. And they were grabbing him in the hall, women giving him phone numbers."

J. Morris Anderson would later file a $607 million lawsuit against Tyson, Williams, and Black Expo, saying that "Reverend Williams and the Black Expo hid behind the cloth of the ministry and brought Mike Tyson into the rehearsal hall to feast on the flesh of the Miss Black America Pageant queens." It was a terrific piece of self-lawyering on Anderson's part, a marvelous bit of Americana, in which he coined the phrase "serial buttocks fondler." He also alleged being victimized by a "glittering, dirty, rotten, monkey-faced lie," and named ten contestants who were allegedly fondled or otherwise abused.

After a radio interview, Tyson went to the expo's opening ceremonies, under a canopy in front of the convention center, along with Jackson, Williams, and Mayor William Hudnut, who gave Tyson a key to the city. "That's where the serial buttocks fondling appears to have been most evident," Anderson says. While Jackson made a speech, Mike Tyson got to meet more girls, including the then reigning Miss Black America, Rosie Jones, who three weeks later filed a $100 million lawsuit for sexual harassment. (Tyson allegedly asked her "What's wrong, you don't want to help a black man out?" when she rebuffed his overture.)

Williams, however, insists that it's all a matter of perception, and perspective. "These same girls were all around again, and they were playing with him and he was playing with them. . . . That's not to say that what he did is justified at all, if he had done those things. But it is not un-

common for men . . . when I'm putting my arm around a woman's waist, a number of things can happen. If you go a little too far, then the woman corrects you. But $100 million is a little bit steep." J. Morris Anderson has since dropped his suit, and now says that "several of these girls took advantage" of the situation. "I personally believe that several of them lied."

After the opening ceremony, Tyson, Jackson, and a few others went to the Black Orchid Lounge, a soul-food restaurant, after which they all went their separate ways. Tyson headed over to the Hoosier Dome, to see the Johnny Gill concert. The boxer watched the concert from backstage, where, according to a report in *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, he was greeted with a hug and a kiss by the woman who has brought the rape charges. The story said Tyson had arranged to meet her at the Omni after the concert.

The beauty contestant entered Tyson's room, No. 606 at the Canterbury, at about two A.M. At 4:45 A.M., someone called the front desk and said that Mike would be checking out. A limo was en route to take Tyson and Dale Edwards to the Indianapolis International Airport for USAir's six A.M. flight back to Cleveland, even though Tyson was prepaid in the hotel for the next two days.

That evening, July 18, the woman participated in the pageant. Late that night she went to the Methodist Hospital emergency room for a rape examination—about twenty-four hours after the alleged assault. She then reported the alleged crime to the police. Detectives went to Room 606, where they discovered the room had not been cleaned—Tyson had left a DO NOT DISTURB sign on the door. The detectives confiscated the bedspread, a shirt, a sequined collar, toothpaste, a toothbrush, and mouthwash.

In the weeks before his trial, Tyson didn't seem especially concerned about it. "He's not worried," says Camille Ewald. "He knows he didn't do what they said he did. He knows he didn't do it. The only time you are worried is when you did something you're not supposed to."

Don King suspects a publicity ploy. "[Rape is] one of the most heinous type of crimes there can be in a society. But you also can see the rash of false accusations right down the line that created this type of atmosphere, that would make people think of doing it [falsely accusing Tyson]." However, the woman's family has refused requests for interviews as well as the routine cash offers from tabloids for her story.

Meanwhile, Tyson's old pals watch from a distance and worry. "Mike is going to walk into the courtroom with Don King on one side, and Jesse Jackson on the next side, and Reverend Al Sharpton on the other side, and ten or twelve black bodyguards, in the middle of K.K.K. territory," says Steve Lott. "I'm afraid of what might happen."

Sharpton says he will likely visit Indianapolis during the trial. "He's a hero—Mike is one of the few people who have risen from Brownsville and accomplished something. He's always remained loyal to his roots. You might remember Mike supported us through Howard Beach, Tawana Brawley—all the way through."

Asked if it might not be inadvisable to politicize Tyson's trial, King strikes a familiar theme. "The issue isn't Reverend Sharpton, the issue isn't Don King. The issue is whether this young lady told a lie or not, you understand? So you have to deal with the issues. Now, if they're gonna lynch Mike Tyson, then they gonna lynch him anyway. After all, you know, you're dealing in the home of the Ku Klux Klan. So now you ain't gotta worry about trying to gild the lily or trying to make it different. You can never go to the oppressor asking for relief. If he was gonna give you relief, he wouldn't be hitting you on the head, you know what I mean? So you're asking mercy from the merciless."

If Tyson does go free, King knows that he can't rely on the screening system to keep his prizefighter out of trouble. At some point, Tyson has to decide to do that himself.

"Mike Tyson is responsible for himself," King says. "He's three times seven and some. My responsibility is to teach, to talk to, to advise, and to have a relationship with and give him a love and responsibility that he didn't have before. The day that Mike Tyson can be independent of anyone is the day that I look for. And you can never be independent if you're gonna keep the thing in his mouth that he can suck on all the time, yunnerstan?"

Finally, King says he does have one regret—that he wasn't able to arrange a title fight between Tyson and Holyfield before the trial. "For a $100 million promotion, I would have fought for that promotion if Mike Tyson was going to jail the next day. See, that's the difference with me. I would have captured immortality in the promotion. Plus, Mike woulda went to jail a rich man, you know what I mean?

"And I'd have had some money, too, while he was gone." □

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PISCES ♓ *February 19–March 20*

This is not your moment to step out of a limo and wave to the paparazzi. Don't even think about your reputation now, or about how people have betrayed you. Mars is in your 12th house until the last weekend in March, and you can deal with that in a variety of ways. You can go sit at a bar and tell the bartender how easily you could have made it if it hadn't been for all those jerks out there. Or you can demolish your ego, find happiness in intimate surroundings, dedicate yourself to a higher cause, and contemplate the impermanence of all things. If that doesn't work, maybe you should try the bar.

ARIES ♈ *March 21–April 19*

Like you, your Aries role model, Captain James T. Kirk of the starship *Enterprise*, had long periods of obedience and docility, punctuated by wild spells. Like you, he couldn't resist finding heroic rationalizations for breaking the rules and getting in trouble. With a new moon on February 3 and the entrance of Mars into Aquarius on February 17 (it will be there through most of March), you'll be zapped with a real case of Kirkitis. Your grandmother will say you're just kicking up your red-blooded heels. Your shrink, however, will call it acting out. And that's why you hate shrinks.

TAURUS ♉ *April 20–May 20*

Thank heaven for the joy kids will give you at the full moon on February 18, because hot triangles mean big pressure this month. Split loyalties will tug at you till you feel like the baby King Solomon had to rule on. Both in-laws and outlaws could demand your undivided attention or unconditional love. The sun, Venus, and Mars square Pluto on February 12, March 8, and March 18, respectively, and during the whole period you'll be squeezed by everyone to give yourself up and become the Stepford Wife, the Model Husband, the Exemplary Parent, or the Consummate Professional. People call you inflexible? If they only knew.

GEMINI ♊ *May 21–June 21*

Loved ones have been telling you to let go and let God, and about now you're getting pretty sick of it. How great it would be if a certain somebody would send you a sign that your taxes will be taken care of, or that you will not be attacked by some vicious critic who doesn't like the way you run your life or the twang in your voice. You've taken to staying home a little more, maybe just to be able to check on what goes into the food. The passage of five planets through your 9th house from February 3 well into March means good news. So come on, smile. No more fear of flying.

CANCER ♋ *June 22–July 22*

Predictions make you sweat more than a dose of jalapeño pepper. All you really need to know is that the entire population of the earth is *not* conspiring against you or waiting until the moment you feel safe to abandon you. When you're frustrated because the round peg won't fit into the square hole, call your sister or a neighbor who can talk you off the ledge. The focus now is on sex, death, wills, and money, so if you must obsess during the next few weeks, that's what to obsess about. The conjunction of Venus and Mars on February 19 would be great for romance. Too bad the moon's in Virgo. Work around it.

LEO ♌ *July 23–August 22*

You have good reason to be gun-shy in relationships. You know damned well where soft lights and old Frank Sinatra records can lead. When Venus meets Mars on February 19, you'll want to believe a whole new era is dawning. However, when those planets meet Saturn on February 28 and March 6, respectively, new lovers will be likely to meet ex-husbands, or old girlfriends will show up. Lawyers may become indispensable at this point. Remember, good relationships thrive best on irritating reality, and we all need romance—even if it's downright stupid.

VIRGO ♍ *August 23–September 22*

From the moment the new moon hits your 6th house on February 3, you will for some time need to muster all your skills for detail. If certain people make fun of you, let them laugh. Get healthy and work hard now, and it will pay off. In the old MGM musicals, where somebody was always putting on a show in somebody else's barn, presto, there was suddenly a magically choreographed, orchestrated, Technicolor extravaganza! In real life, however, you need to know there was definitely a Virgo somewhere around arranging the bobby pins in the star's hair and sweeping up the hay on the set.

LIBRA ♎ *September 23–October 22*

With Venus in Aquarius until March 13, here are descriptions of your ideal mate. HER: If this were the sixties, she'd wear love beads. She's Bette Davis in *Now, Voyager*, after she tells her mother to shove it. Even now, in appropriate nineties garb, she wears at least one ridiculously clashing accessory. HIM: Normally he's the uptightest Wasp at the country club, but now, determined to recapture the feeling of Paris in the thirties, he orders Pernod at lunchtime. He's the straightest guy on Wall Street, except for something deviant he does on the way home from work. Message for all Libras: Learn to love deeply.

SCORPIO ♏ *October 23–November 21*

Last November you proved again that you could jump through a fiery hoop and not even singe your curls. You also may have used up another of your twenty-seven lives. Why bring yourself so close to that bottomless pit? Your ruler, Pluto, is slowing down and beginning its five-month retrograde on February 24. Review your efforts and accomplishments over the last seven months and be content on your secret little island. Try not to slip back into old patterns. Stay conscious. Why get yourself stranded in the desert and then have to race the vultures to the oasis?

SAGITTARIUS ♐ *November 22–December 21*

Although you love the thrill of unfolding a road map for the first time or taking off with your passport in hand, you have been very earthbound lately. You haven't sold any furniture out of your garage in a long time. Of course, it was too good to be true. Now the blinders are off, and your interests are widening. Your 3rd-and-9th-house axis is going to be triggered, even before the full moon on February 18. You must experience the taste of another culture now. So go ahead. Move to Russia or marry a Russian. At least try the chicken Kiev on the menu, with or without butter.

CAPRICORN ♑ *December 22–January 19*

Many Capricorns resort to spangles and curly blond wigs just to prove that they are *not* soulless drones. This February, while Venus is aspecting Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto, you'll attempt again to disprove the stereotype by acting a little scandalously. Of course, you're always listening for the sound of the trumpet that signals judgment for the sins of pleasure. With planets touching Saturn before the second week in March, you'll hear it. Don't totally forget that time is money. Your right to freedom notwithstanding, you're a Capricorn. Self-acceptance will make it easier for you—not to mention everyone else.

AQUARIUS ♒ *January 20–February 18*

Why are you driving yourself so hard? Must you prove you're still young, potent, attractive, creative, and, above all, *not* obsolete? Must you let absolutely everybody know that if that stupid parade passes you by, it will have to be over your dead body? Venus and Mars enter your sign on February 19, allowing you to be all those vital things without having to huff and puff to prove it. Saturn in Aquarius is still causing a few major wrinkles in both your master plan and your face. You're also grappling with the question of whether to kiss all butts or to punch out the first person who looks at you cross-eyed.

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Norma Shearer and Irving Thalberg

Vanity Fair, March 1932

"He's too good to last," Charles MacArthur said of Irving Thalberg. "The lamb doesn't lie down with the lion for long." In fact, the boy wonder from Brooklyn lasted longer than anybody thought he would—and with Louis B. Mayer at that. Told he might never see thirty because of a weak heart, Thalberg became Universal's head of production at twenty and vice president of the new MGM at twenty-four. His first MGM film, *He Who Gets Slapped* (1924), featured the ingenue Norma Shearer, who took the baby mogul for an office boy, but had the good sense to marry him once she realized her mistake. Responsible for fifty features a year, including *Grand Hotel, A Night at the Opera, Camille,* and *The Good Earth,* Thalberg, who rarely took a screen credit, brought panache to the role of producer, tirelessly campaigning for quality with his dictum: "Movies aren't made, they're remade." He particularly beguiled writers (even though he battled the fledgling Screen Writers Guild), especially F. Scott Fitzgerald, who rewrote him as that eternal Hollywood icon, the Last Tycoon. His legacy is noted at the Oscars with the Irving G. Thalberg Memorial Award for distinguished film production, and this month in TNT's *MGM: When the Lion Roars.*

Photograph by STEICHEN

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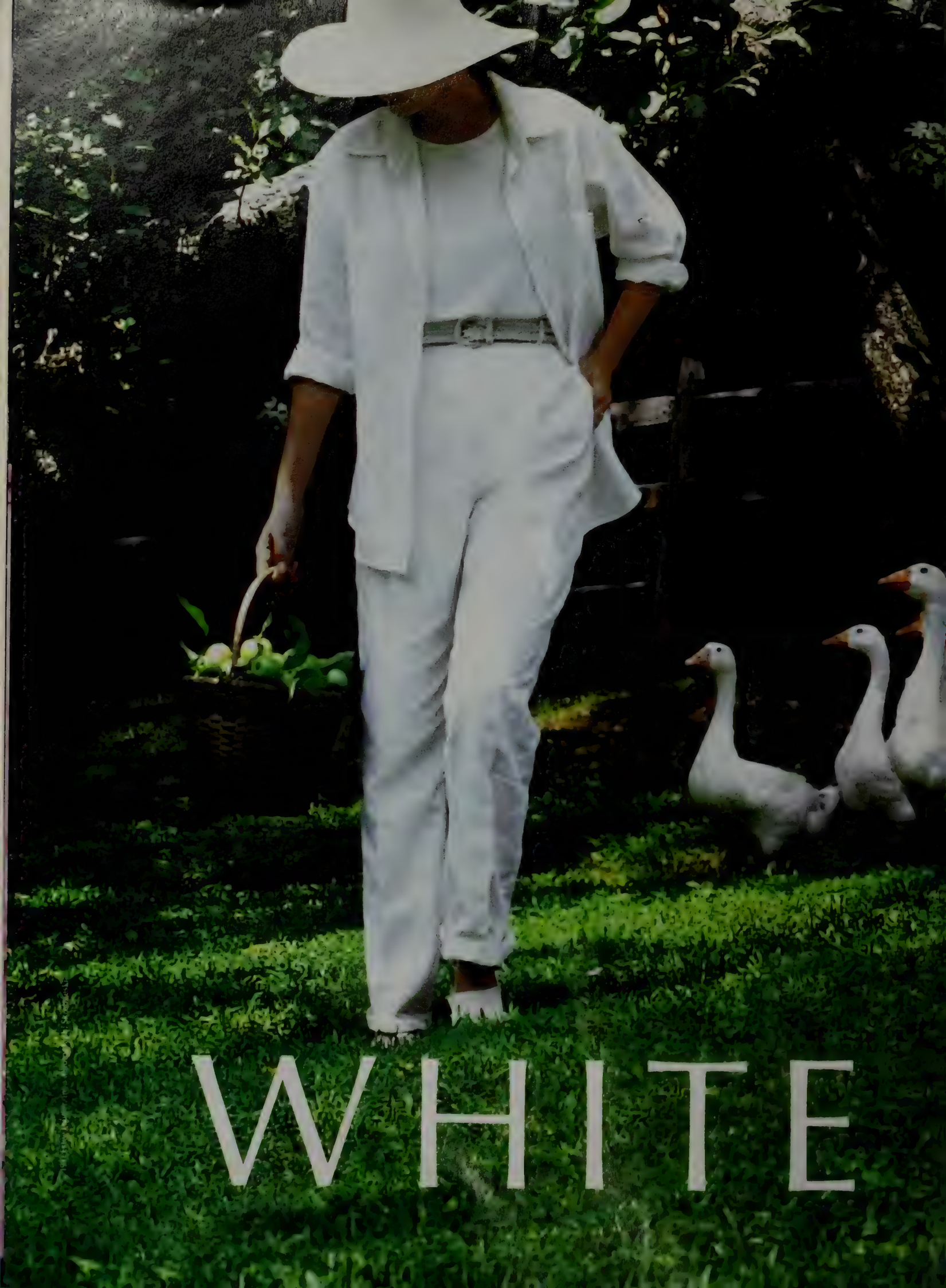
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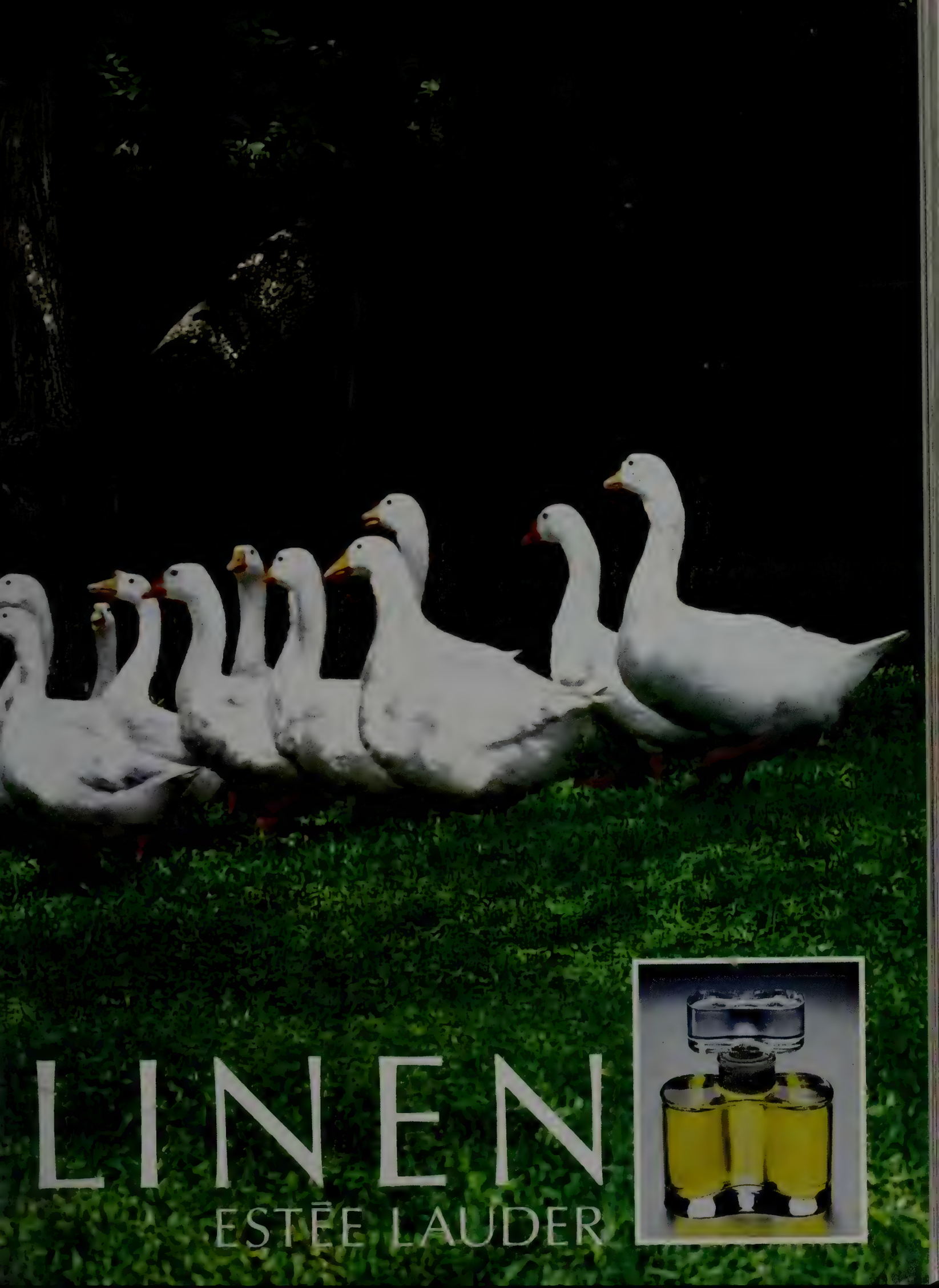
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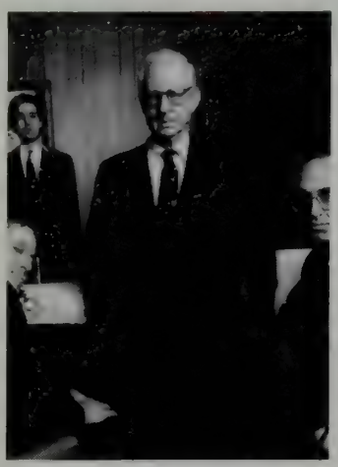
Volume 55 Number 4 April 1992



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Editor's Letter

The Ghosts of Munich

On September 18, 1931, twenty-three-year-old Geli Raubal died a few steps from Adolf Hitler's Munich bedroom, a bullet through her chest, his 6.35-mm. Walther pistol by her hand. She had been his half-niece, his doomed *amour passionnel,* "a tabooed love of Tristan moods and tragic sentimentality," according to one German historian. Her death, hastily ruled a suicide, was more devastating to Hitler than almost any other event in his life, and ever after, he kept a bust of Geli in his bedroom and fresh chrysanthemums in her perfectly preserved chamber. The nature of his obsession with her remains controversial—as are the circumstances surrounding her death. It was but one of millions to come, one which may provide a window into the depths of his psyche.

A 1931 German newspaper said the truth about Geli's last moments in Hitler's apartment was obscured by a "mysterious darkness." Sixty years later there is, as Ron Rosenbaum reports on page 178, a new campaign to penetrate that darkness by exhuming Geli's body and reopening the case.

Geli Raubal was an attractive seventeen-year-old when her Uncle Adolf summoned her to serve as his housekeeper in Munich. He was, at the time, a rising political figure presiding over an eccentric demimonde peopled by what one early biographer called "armed bohemians"—pimps, con men, occultists, petty thugs, and sexual outlaws. For five years, he proudly squired her around to cafés and theaters and paid for singing lessons. In public, she became a celebrity, his consort, the envy of countless women. But in private, Geli was a virtual prisoner of Hitler's possessive jealousy, tormented, according to one school of historians, by the aberrant nature of his sexual needs. On the last day of her life, she and Hitler had a heated quarrel, apparently over her desire to escape him. The next morning, she was found dead.

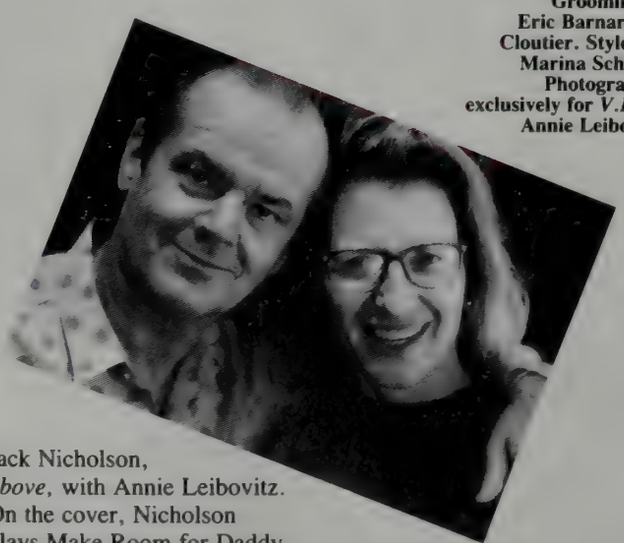
To some, the official verdict of suicide is no more credible than the Warren report's conclusion on who killed J.F.K. If there was nothing to cover up, if Geli had really killed herself because of "stage fright," as the official story had it, why did Hitler's henchmen prevent a thorough autopsy, derail the police inquiry, and quickly spirit the young girl's body off to be buried in her hometown of Vienna? To find the answers, Ron Rosenbaum searched through archives in America and Europe and tracked down surviving witnesses in Munich and Vienna, resuming the scandalous murder investigation that was suppressed sixty years ago.

Tina Brown

Editor in chief

Cover

Baby Talk



Jack Nicholson, *above*, with Annie Leibovitz. On the cover, Nicholson plays Make Room for Daddy in a mini–baby boom with models Thea Rhodes, left, Emily Rosen, right, and Claudia Levy, not shown here.

Jack Nicholson wears a vest by Charvet at Bergdorf Goodman, a shirt by Byblos, a tie by Paul Smith, and pants by Giorgio Armani. Grooming by Eric Barnard for Cloutier. Styled by Marina Schiano. Photographed exclusively for *V.F.* by Annie Leibovitz.

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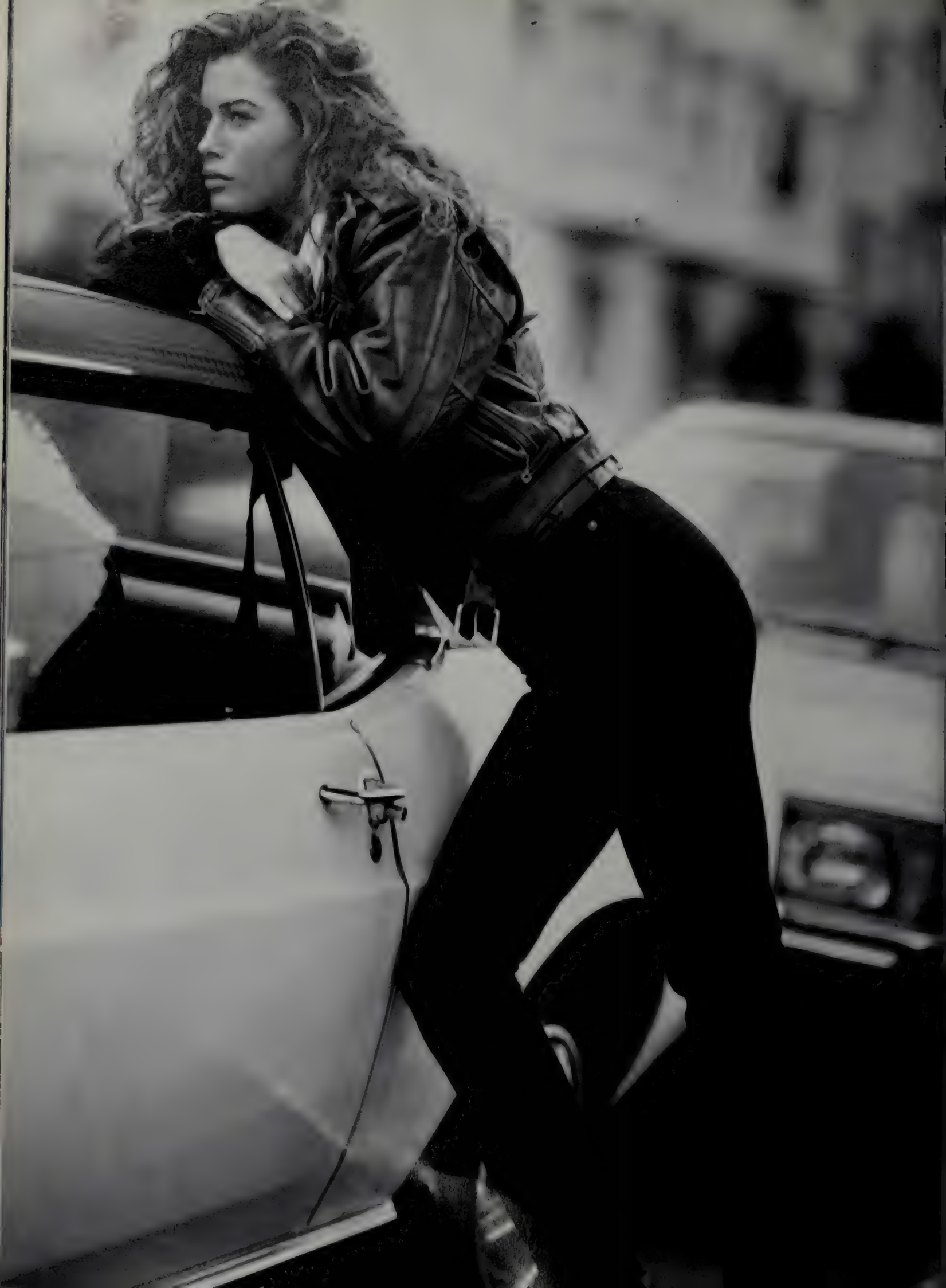

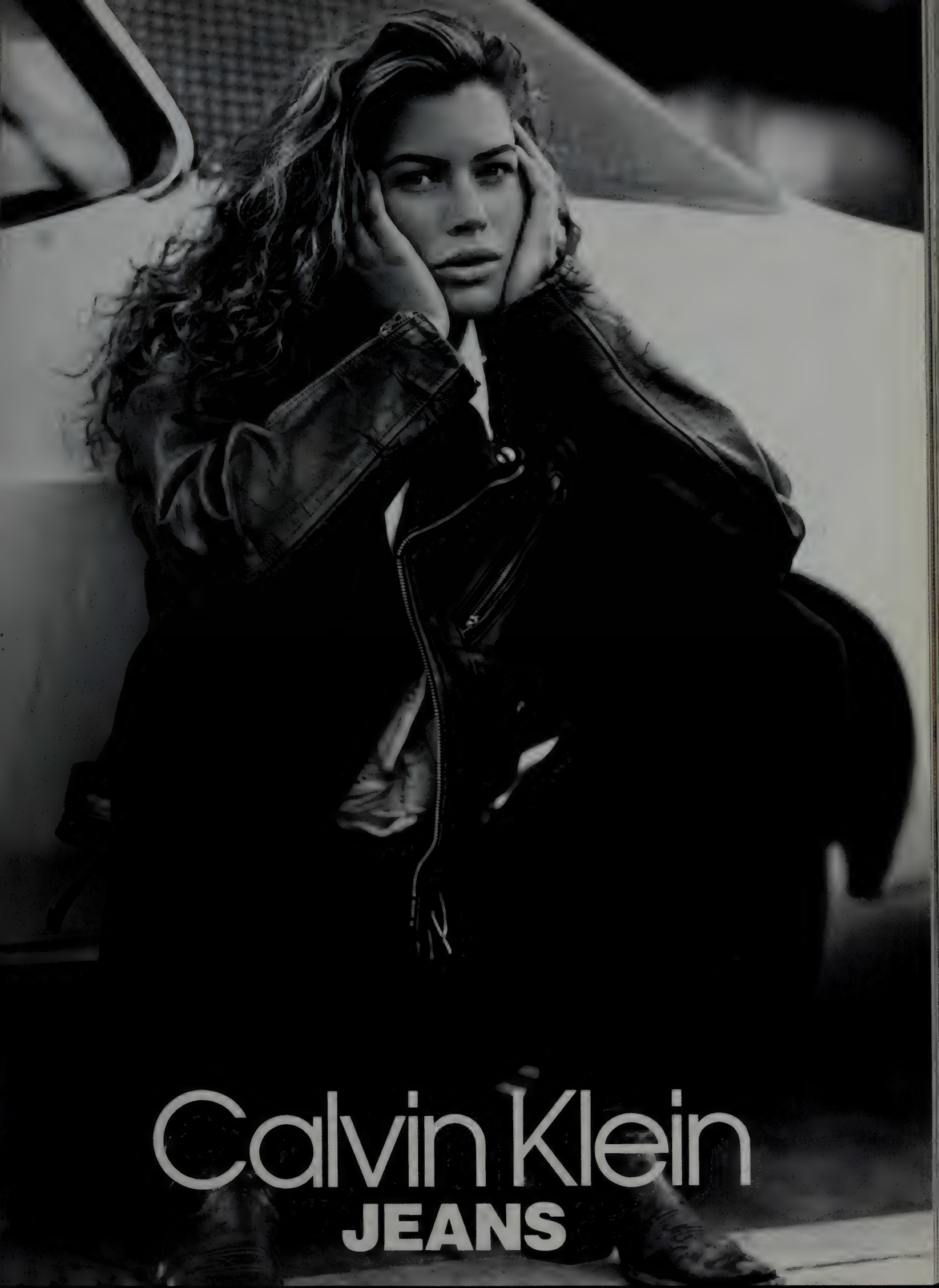
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WE COULD BUILD AN AUTOMOBILE WITH AN EVEN SMOOTHER RIDE, BUT THAT WOULD MAKE US UNCOMFORTABLE.

It seems the relentless pursuit of the plushest possible driving experience has blinded some of the world's carmakers to a very important point:

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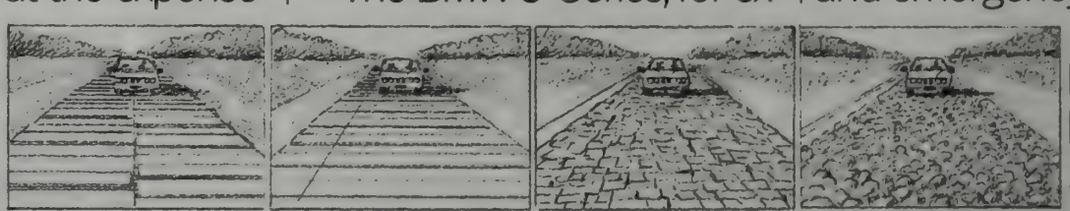
The ability of a car to hold the road — and thus, the ability of a driver to maintain control over his automobile — are largely dictated by the car's suspension system. Which is why at BMW — a company long recognized for its achievements in engine technology — every new automotive design is begun not from the engine down, but rather, from the suspension system up.

▲ Coil springs and shock absorbers are mounted separately to the chassis for improved ride comfort on uneven roads.

The BMW 5-Series, for example, offers a perfect case in point. Both the 525i and 535i are equipped with highly developed, internationally patented front and rear suspension systems so refined, "the communication with the driver is perfect" according to the editors of Sports Car International.

Its acoustically decoupled front suspension employs a unique double-pivot system with two independent lower control arms rather than the conventional single-arm design. This increases stability, minimizes dive, and provides improved control and feel under all driving conditions. While the track link rear suspension system, also an exclusive BMW design, assures crisp, predictable handling in both cornering and emergency situations.



▲ To achieve its outstanding ride quality, the 5-Series is tested and refined on all types of road surfaces.

The extremely rigid steel body of the 5-Series enables the suspension to operate more accurately from a firmer platform (while also optimizing passenger protection in the

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While other carmakers strive to isolate the driver with an artificially smooth ride, the BMW 5-Series is engineered to offer the best possible ride quality, while also providing enough feedback to safely perform the task of driving. Automobile Magazine named the 535i "one of the best sedans *ever* built."

event of a collision). And, unlike the loose, lazy steering systems you'll find in many of today's luxury sedans, the speed-sensitive, variable-assist steering of the BMW 5-Series sedan responds to the driver's every input and command with an extraordinary amount of precision.

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All this is not to say that the 5-Series ride is unnecessarily demanding or rough. As AutoWeek magazine has pointed out, what sets the 535i apart from other automobiles is its "combination of performance and luxury."

In fact, it is precisely this overall balance which led Automobile Magazine to designate the 535i nothing less than "one of the best sedans *ever* built."

Countless hours spent on the demanding track at Nürburgring helped perfect the 5-Series' internationally patented suspension system.

Driving one of the world's truly remarkable automobiles provides other comforts as well. Like all BMW's, the 5-Series sedans are backed by BMW's 4-year, 50,000-mile bumper-to-bumper warranty,* as well as a nationwide Roadside Assistance program you can call on at any time should the need arise.**

For more information on the BMW 5-Series sedans, simply call 800-334-4BMW.

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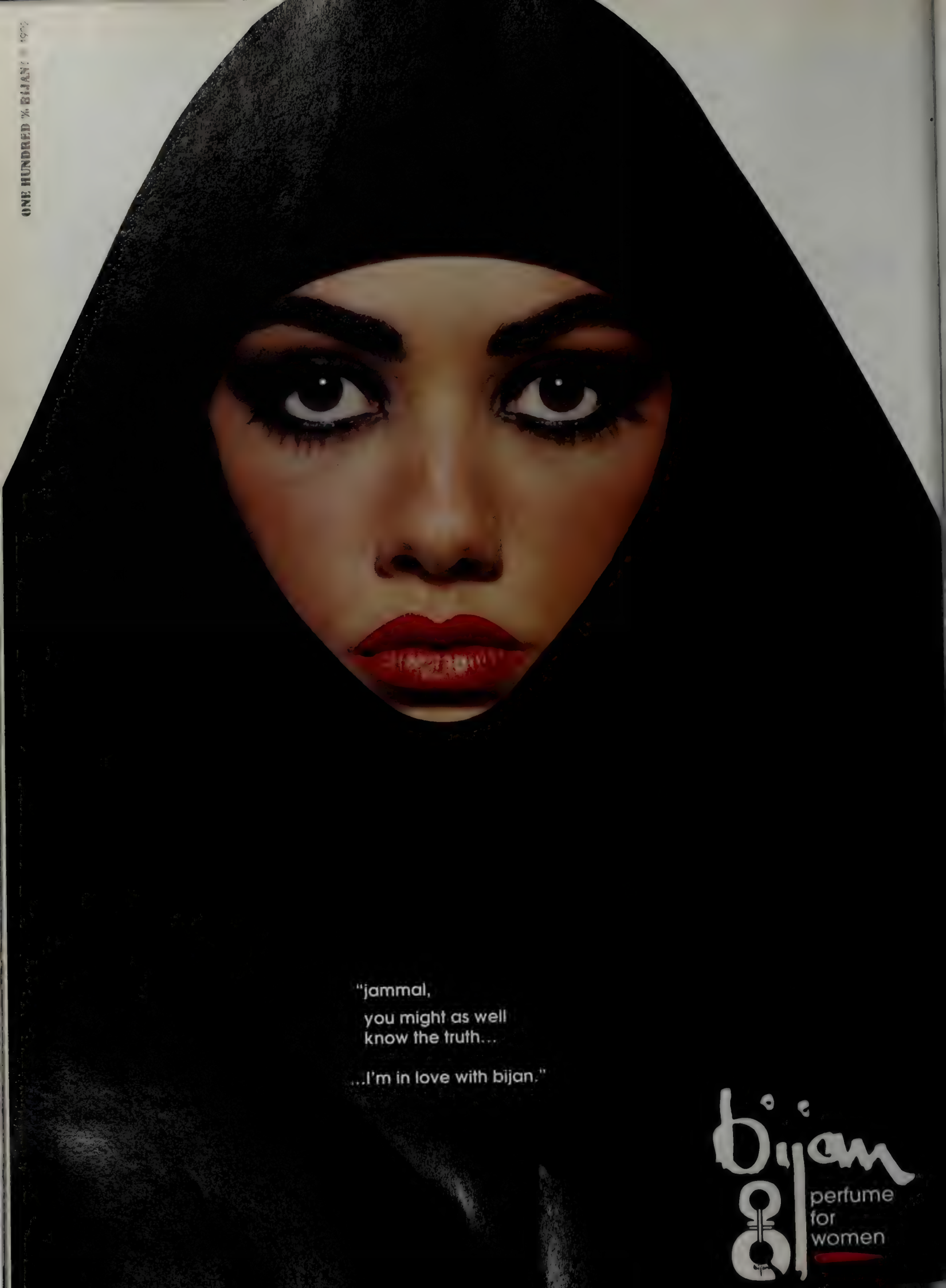

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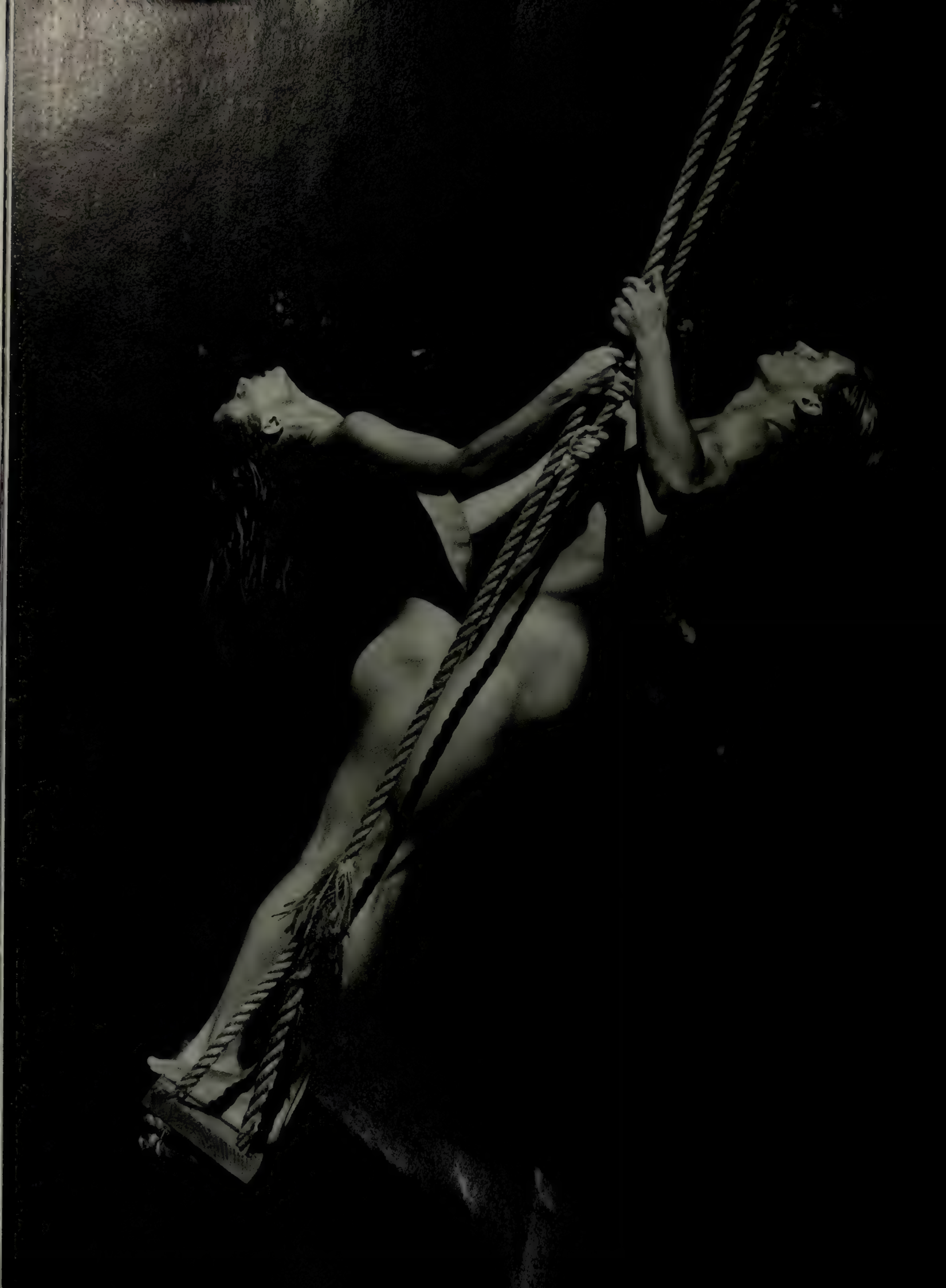

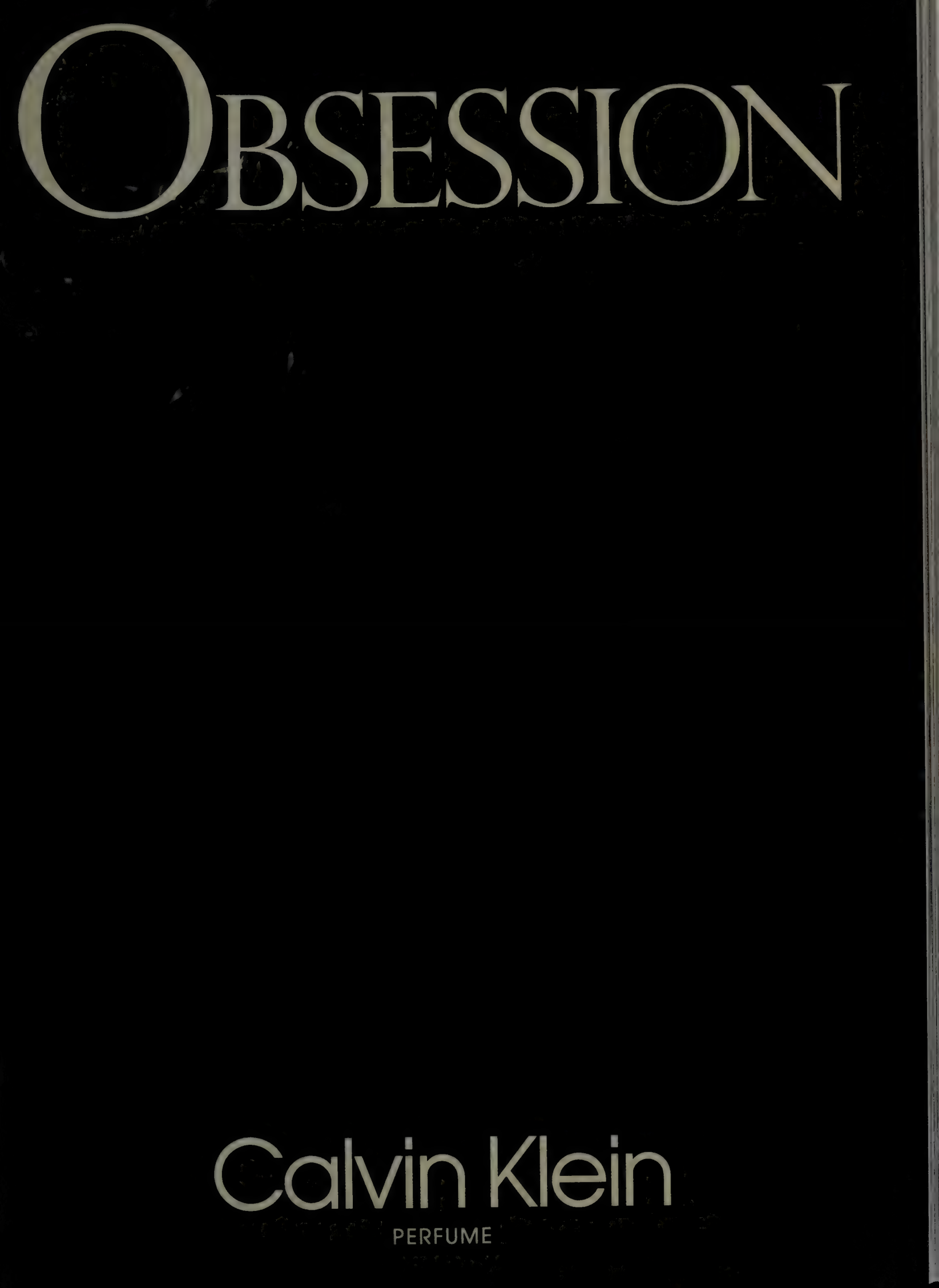
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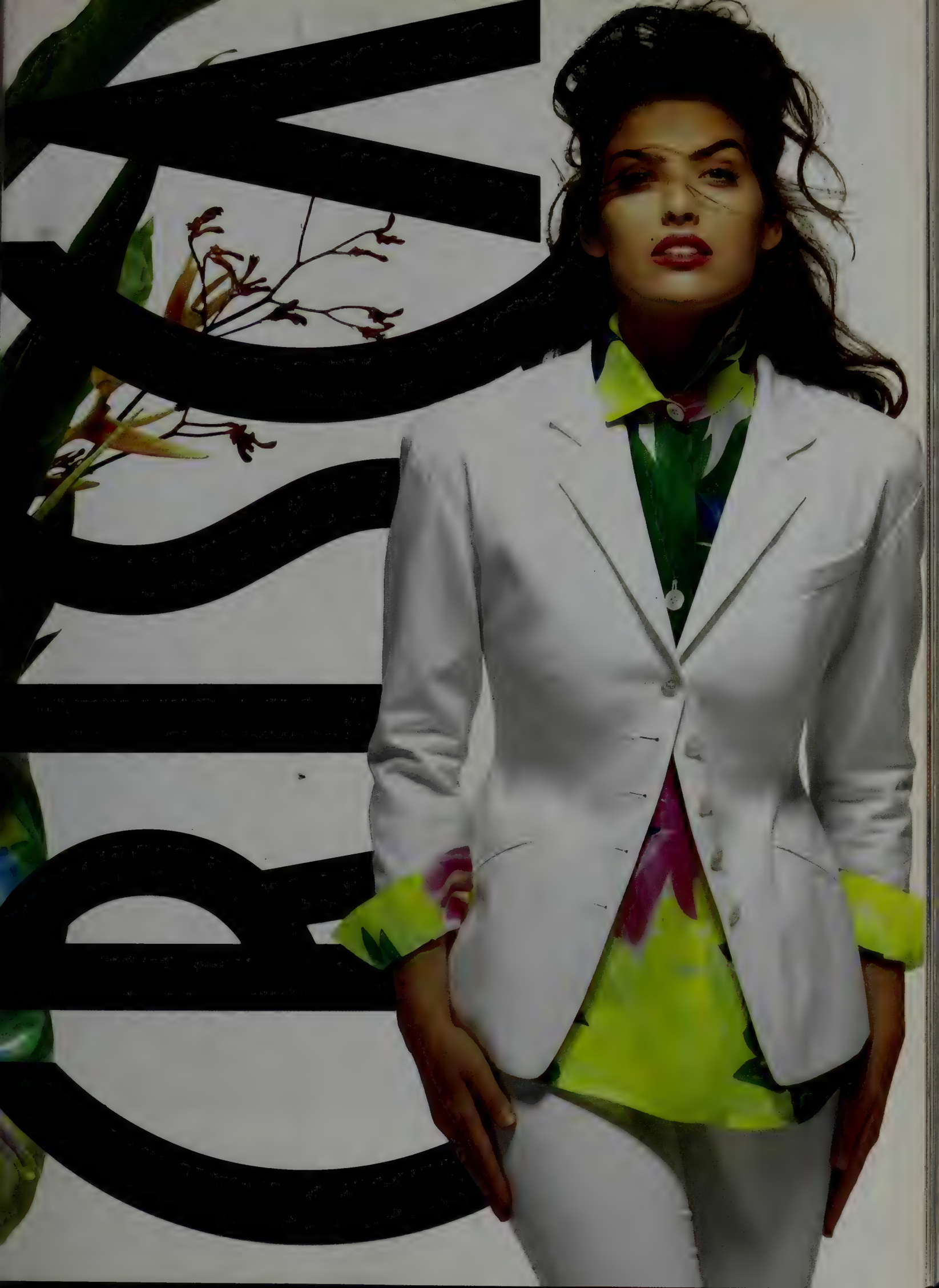

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Letters

READERS BITE BACK

All the Way with *JFK*

Hurray for Norman Mailer on Oliver Stone's *JFK* ["Footfalls in the Crypt," February]. Finally the film has been observed by a clear, dualistic mind that can see both the negative and positive, the power and the beauty in it. Why are Americans so afraid of that which makes them think? We of the post-assassination period need to open our eyes and learn to question everything we see and read. To argue that Oliver Stone has juxtaposed fact with fiction, Hollywood with history, misses the whole point. Never stop thinking and questioning—that is the point. Once we stop, we lose the value of living in a democracy.

ELIZABETH A. MOORE
Baltimore, Maryland

Is Mailer saying that the one-assassin conclusion is flawed because the Establishment subscribes to it? Or because the majority of Americans believe there was a conspiracy? As the great Civil War general William Tecumseh Sherman said, "Vox populi—vox humbug."

RICK KALAMAYA
Longmont, Colorado

Mailer is correct: "At times, bullshit can only be countered with superior bullshit." Washington has tried to protect the American people by giving it a line of superior bullshit about the Kennedy assassination, Vietnam, Watergate, Iran-contra, the savings-and-loan debacle, C.I.A. covert operations, and the threat of the Evil Empire (which disappeared overnight). It's time for Washington to realize that real life for most Americans—full of drive-by shootings, gang wars, homelessness, AIDS, drugs, child abuse, terrifying health costs, and an education system on the brink of bankruptcy—is worse than the "terrible truths" they try to protect us from. During this election year, the American public does not need protection; it needs to know the truth. Oliver Stone is not presenting bullshit in *JFK*, but challenging us to think, seek the truth, and make choices about what we believe.

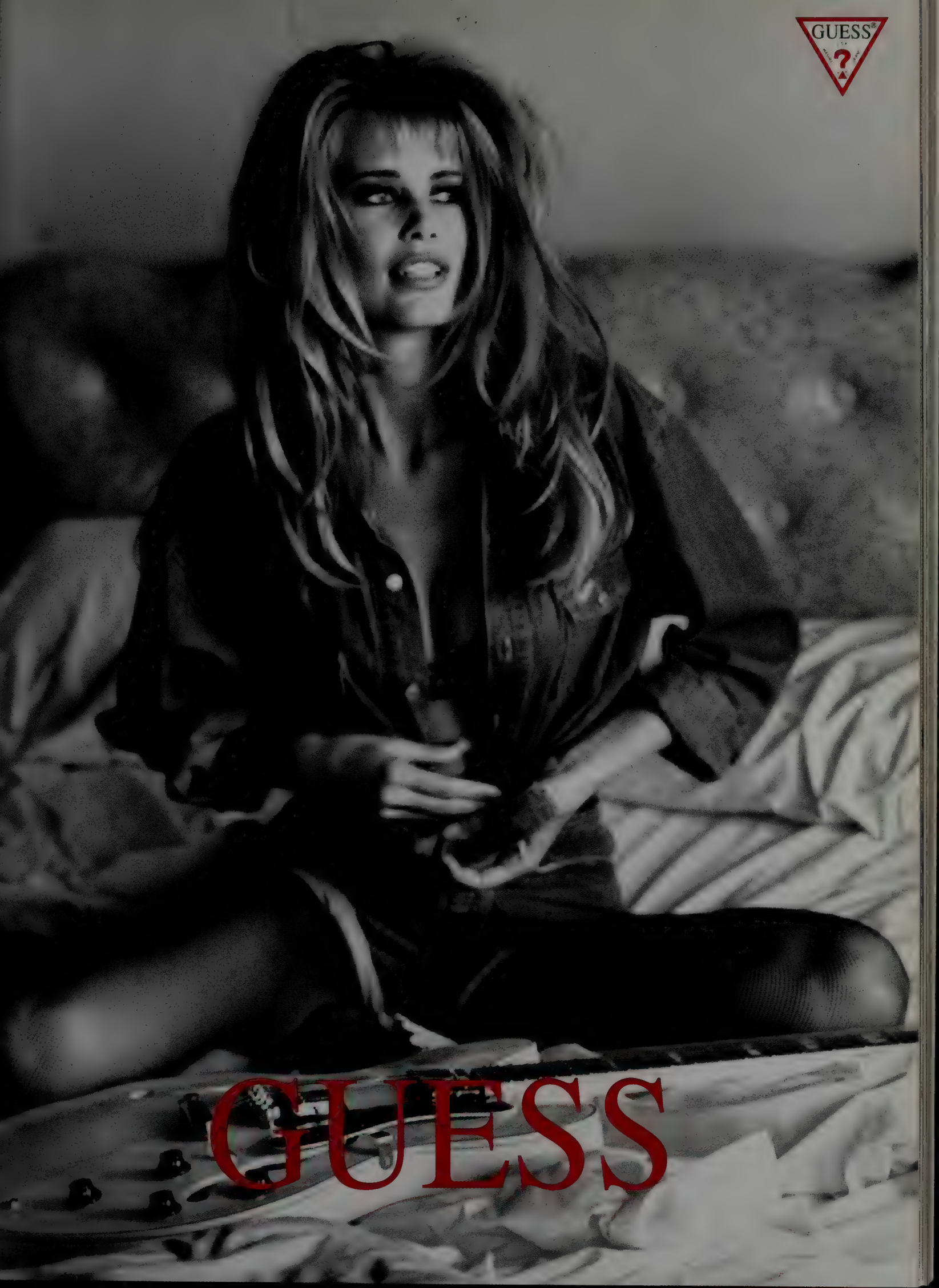
KATIE CURTISS
Sheridan, Wyoming

John F. Kennedy was murdered as I sat in my high-school U.S.-history class. Mailer's article has done more to clarify this horrific event for me than all the other media coverage of the past twenty-eight years. It has helped me resolve that "black hole" in my psyche.

MARY A. TRUDELL
Morrisville, Vermont

To characterize his film *JFK*, Oliver Stone candidly observed in a recent interview in *GQ*, "I believe the Warren Commission [finding] is a great myth . . . maybe you have to create another one." Stone's film, as Mailer points out in his thoughtful and superbly crafted review, is difficult to dismiss, owing to the momentous nature of its subject matter. Because of its evident impact on the public, *JFK* has had the effect of raising public consciousness, which may ultimately result in more accurate information about who killed Kennedy and reasons why the official investigation was so inadequate and mishandled. More than any of Stone's other films, *JFK* is a frontal *(Continued on page 38)*

FEDERICO BOTANA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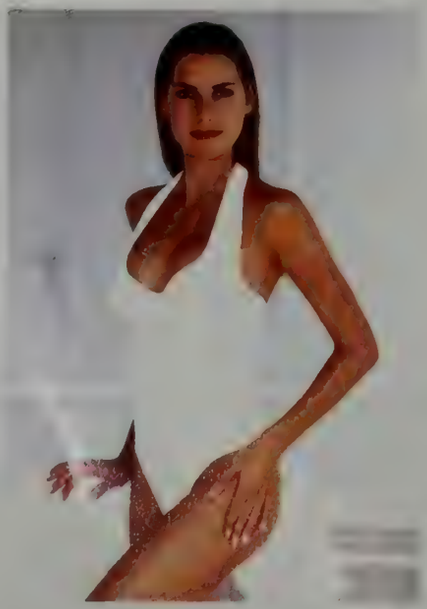

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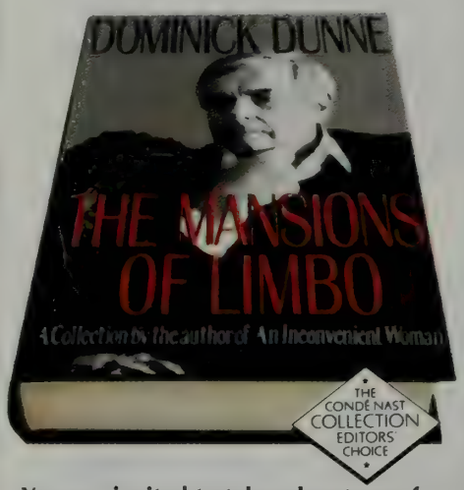

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Letters

(Continued from page 30) assault on the leadership of this country (including, by heavy implication, the incumbent president, who, it is reputed, was a C.I.A. case agent involved in the Bay of Pigs operation). A leadership which may have murdered its own titular head in a dispute over foreign/imperial policy, which has bankrupted the country by spending trillions to defeat an adversary whose threat was grossly and intentionally exaggerated, and which is fully capable of perpetuating disastrous policies, ensuring the country's continuing decline.

DANIEL BERGER
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

How can Norman Mailer call *JFK* a great movie? In the estimation of my wife and me, it is one of the worst movies ever made. It is anti-American. It takes pokes at former chief justice Earl Warren, the Warren Commission, the military, the C.I.A., the F.B.I., and former president Lyndon Johnson. My wife had to walk out when it was three-quarters over because of the filthy language.

ROBERT L. McCOLLOM, M.D.
Sarasota, Florida

Stone is one of the most noteworthy directors of our time because his films are intellectual and he forces us to look beyond the face value of issues.

TRICIA A. MARRAPODI
Tucson, Arizona

While most films inherently re-create reality as myth, *this* brave film transcends all such predictable bunk by confronting our national ills: cowardice, paralysis, and a decay as deep and insidious as the environment's. Something is damnably wrong with America, and Stone's film attempts to underline it. We should embrace such courageous filmmaking.

BARBARA BLY
Venice, California

If You Knew Sununu

I have just finished reading "So Long, Sununu," by Sidney Blumenthal [February], and as a former New Hampshire resident I was not the least bit surprised that Sununu's cocky arrogance and total disregard for everyone were his downfall. I was, however, surprised that it took George Bush three years to get rid of this jackass. Maybe Sununu will have the last laugh—can Bush cut the mustard for another election win in 1992? At any rate, I'm sure celebrations are still going on across the land. Ding, dong, the pit bull's dead!

DONNA M. GILLILAND
Lafayette, California

John Sununu may not be of Sidney Blumenthal's ideological persuasion, but to many he is and remains a hero.

J. TERNAK
Floral City, Florida

I always assumed that the people Sununu bullied would join forces in order to get back at him. But eventually Sununu committed political suicide, and only then did his enemies come out of the woodwork to finish the job. What puzzles me further is that the president played dumb concerning the underhanded techniques Sununu used to get his way. Sununu seemed to flaunt his terror-over-tact personality. He got the job done, but at what expense?

KELSEY E. JOHNSON
Winnetka, Illinois

Your article on Sununu was right on the money except for one thing. Long before the Gulf War, Sununu had compiled research concerning whether his Cuban birth disqualified him for the presidency. In June 1987, John and I represented New Hampshire in a ceremony held to inaugurate the celebration of the bicentennial of the Constitution at Independence Hall in Philadelphia. While waiting for then Vice President Bush to arrive, the governor bragged that he was even smarter than the framers of the Constitution. Why? Because, he gleefully informed me, he had locked safely away "a little surprise"—a legal brief which in his mind would allow him to circumvent the constitutional requirement that to run for president one must be native-born. Sununu always went out of his way to let everyone know that he was the world's smartest man, but one would have thought that even he would acknowledge that James Madison, for example, were he alive today, might have the edge. Apparently not.

LORENCA ROSAL
Malibu, California

Under His Thumb

Stephen Schiff's interview with Mick Jagger ["Mick's Moves," February] is great! I've read so much on Jagger that dwells on his latest antics, but Schiff pulls all the myths, stories, and truths into a *(Continued on page 46)*

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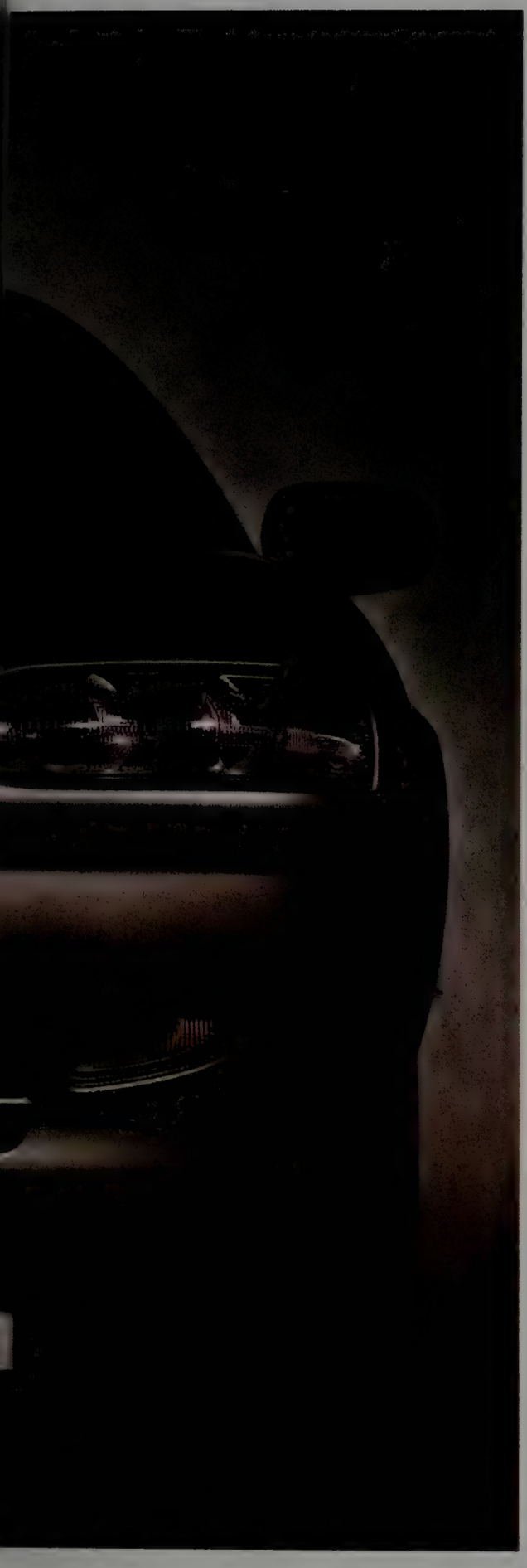

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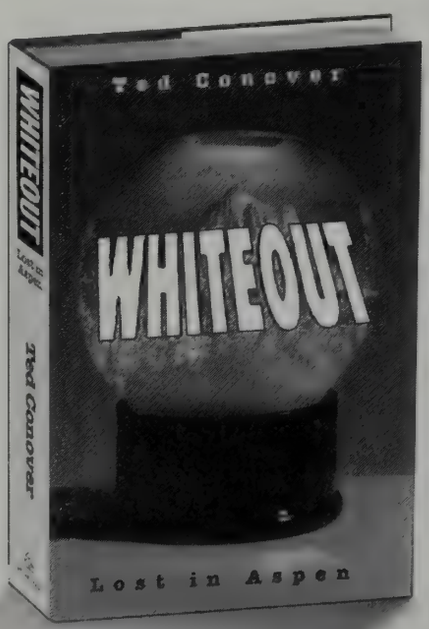
— Tracy Kidder



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RANDOM HOUSE

Letters

(Continued from page 38) comprehensive look at one of the world's most exciting performers.

MARY VIOLA
Libertyville, Illinois

At thirteen, I carved "Mick Is Sex" into a school desktop. Now, at forty, I'm carving it into my laptop.

BARBARA R. STURGES
Alexandria, Virginia

Satisfaction at last! My favorite musician on the cover of my favorite magazine. Thanks for sprinkling the "Brown Sugar" on the *crème* of the monthlies.

LAUREN CHARM TENENBAUM
Wantagh, New York

Tomorrow I'm seeing *Freejack* for the second time, and I'm on the lookout for Mick's new solo album. I've been a Jagger fan since 1964, and I intend to keep rolling with the Rolling Stones until I can't no more.

ESPIE VILLA
Boise, Idaho

Mick is still God!

SPALDING NIX
Woodberry Forest, Virginia

Tony Awards

I was very impressed with Kathleen Tynan's article on Tony Richardson ["Exit Prospero," February]. I have followed the world of theater and film for three decades, and this is one of the best and most entertaining pieces I have read in that time. It is nice to think of a director who was "impervious" to ridicule, who even banned critics from an important screening.

MARIANNE LABA
Tacoma, Washington

Tony Richardson was a friend for twenty years. Despite his busy, complicated, and widespread life, he had the ability to keep renewing his friendships. He also had a compulsive habit of keenly studying and observing everything around him. Tony never understood my love of classic cars, so it surprised me when he asked to spend his sixtieth-birthday weekend on a car-driven odyssey through Southern California. His obsessive observations never dimmed, even though he was uncharacteristically pensive and introspective on the trip. He was looking forward to the summer in France, his next project, and the unfolding adventure of his life.

JADE McCALL
Hollywood, California

I would be remiss were I not to comment on Richardson's assessment of his boyhood school, Ashville College. An old Ashvillian myself, and a younger contemporary of Richardson's, I think it should be remembered that he spent most of his time at Ashville during the war years, when, incidentally, the school was evacuated to Bowness, in the Lake District. Few English schoolboys at that time were able to enjoy such safety from the German bombing in such an idyllic and healthy setting. While I agree that nights there could get abominably cold, that beatings and bullying were rife, and that the standard of education left a lot to be desired, I would suggest that Ashville was not a unique "horrors beyond horrors." Most other boarding schools then suffered similar deprivations and abuses; any schoolmasters worth their salt were in the services. This does not condone the situation, but it does put Richardson's experience into a far more dispassionate perspective. One must also wonder, if "the place was monstrous, and there was no education," how from such a school he was able to win a scholarship to Oxford University. It should further be pointed out that Tony Richardson ended his school days at Ashville as head prefect.

MICHAEL FOXWELL
Willowdale, Ontario

Through some knowing sense of privacy, Kathleen Tynan chose not to comment on or speculate about the circumstances surrounding Richardson's contraction of AIDS. No one who has H.I.V. is to blame. This is a disease that can and will affect all of us. The stigma will be lifted only when all of us treat each death in the same way Tynan has—as the loss of one irreplaceable soul.

RICHARD J. HARRIES
Greenwich, Connecticut

Watching the Detectives

Thanks for "The Swinging Detectives," by James Wolcott [February]. It's about time someone gave *Law & Order* its due as the best detective show to hit the airwaves.

MELISSA WHEATLEY
Saint John, New Brunswick

Letters to the editor should be sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to: The Editor, Vanity Fair, 350 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10017. The letters chosen for publication may be edited for length and clarity.

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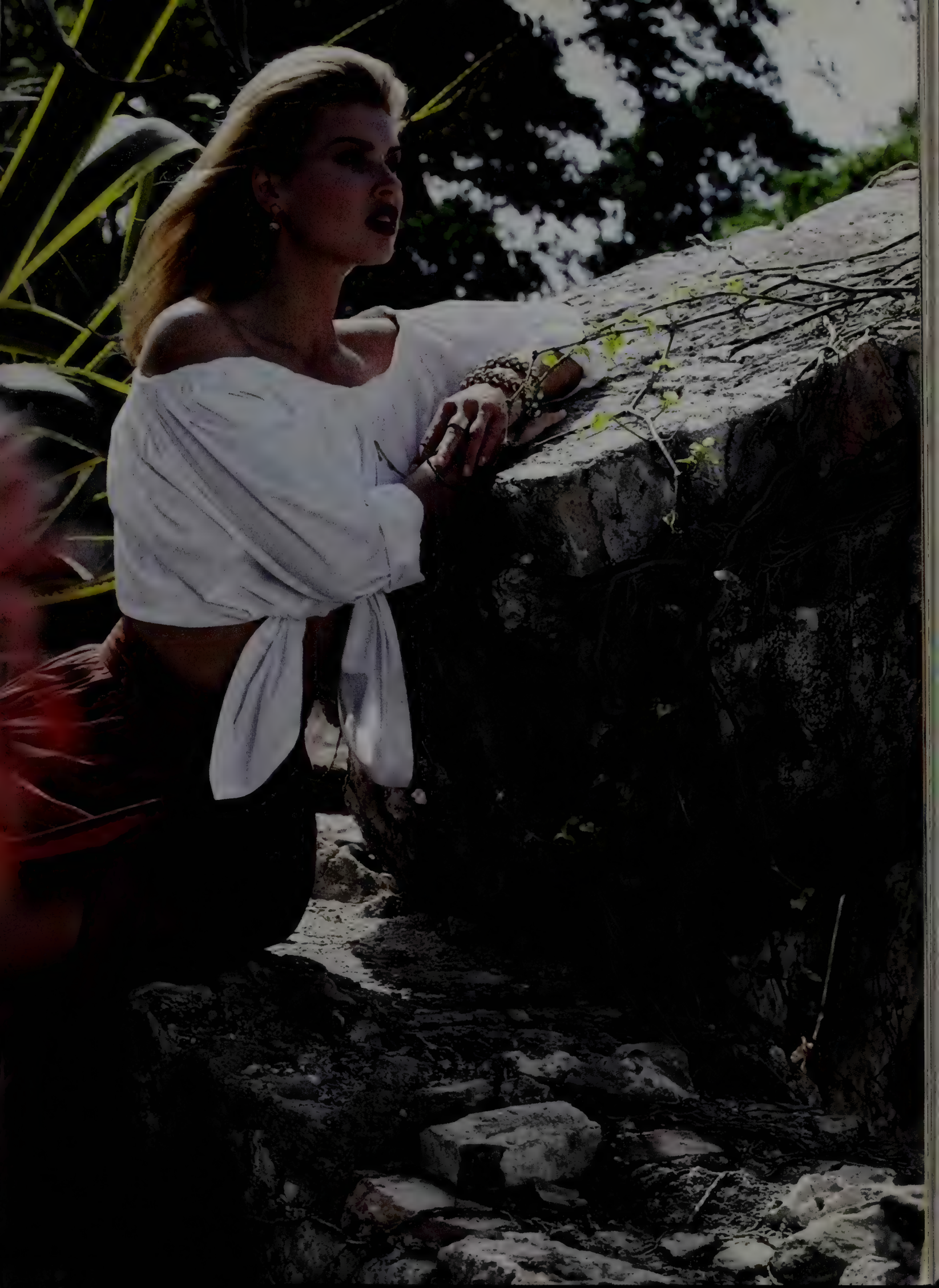

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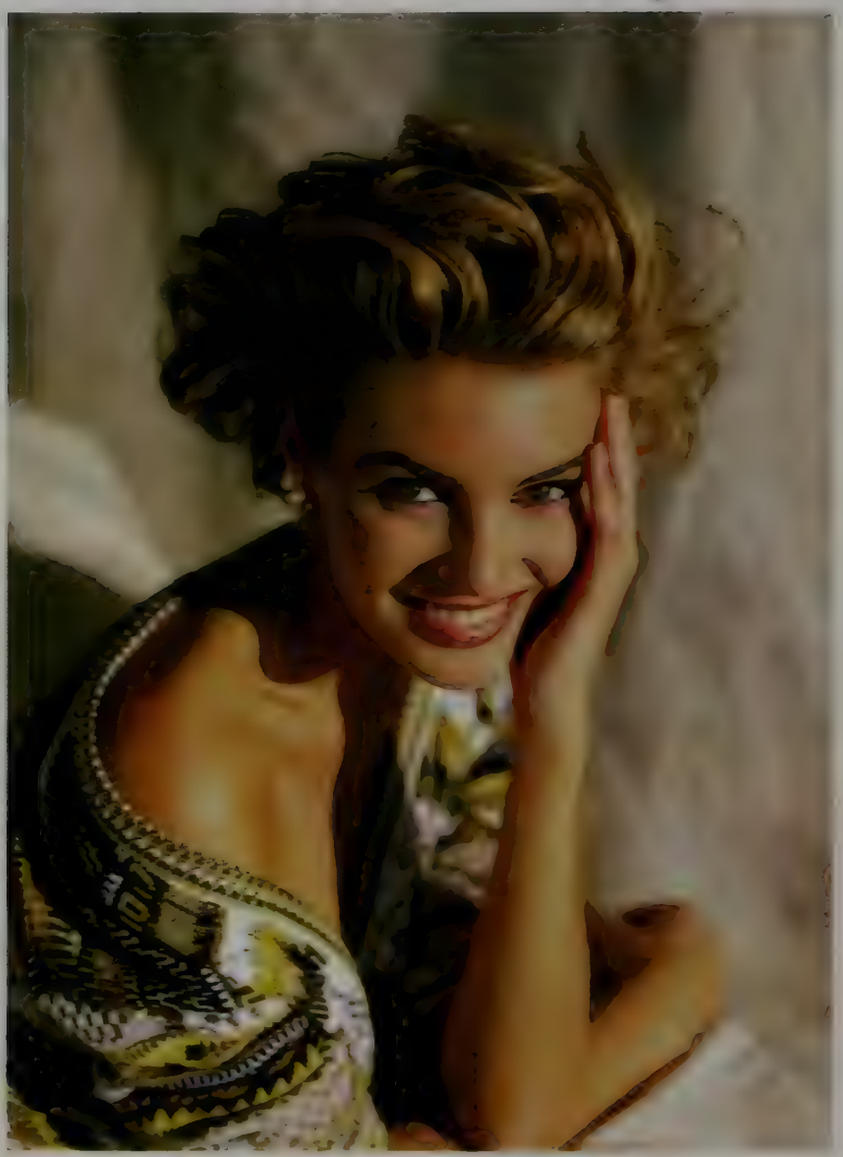

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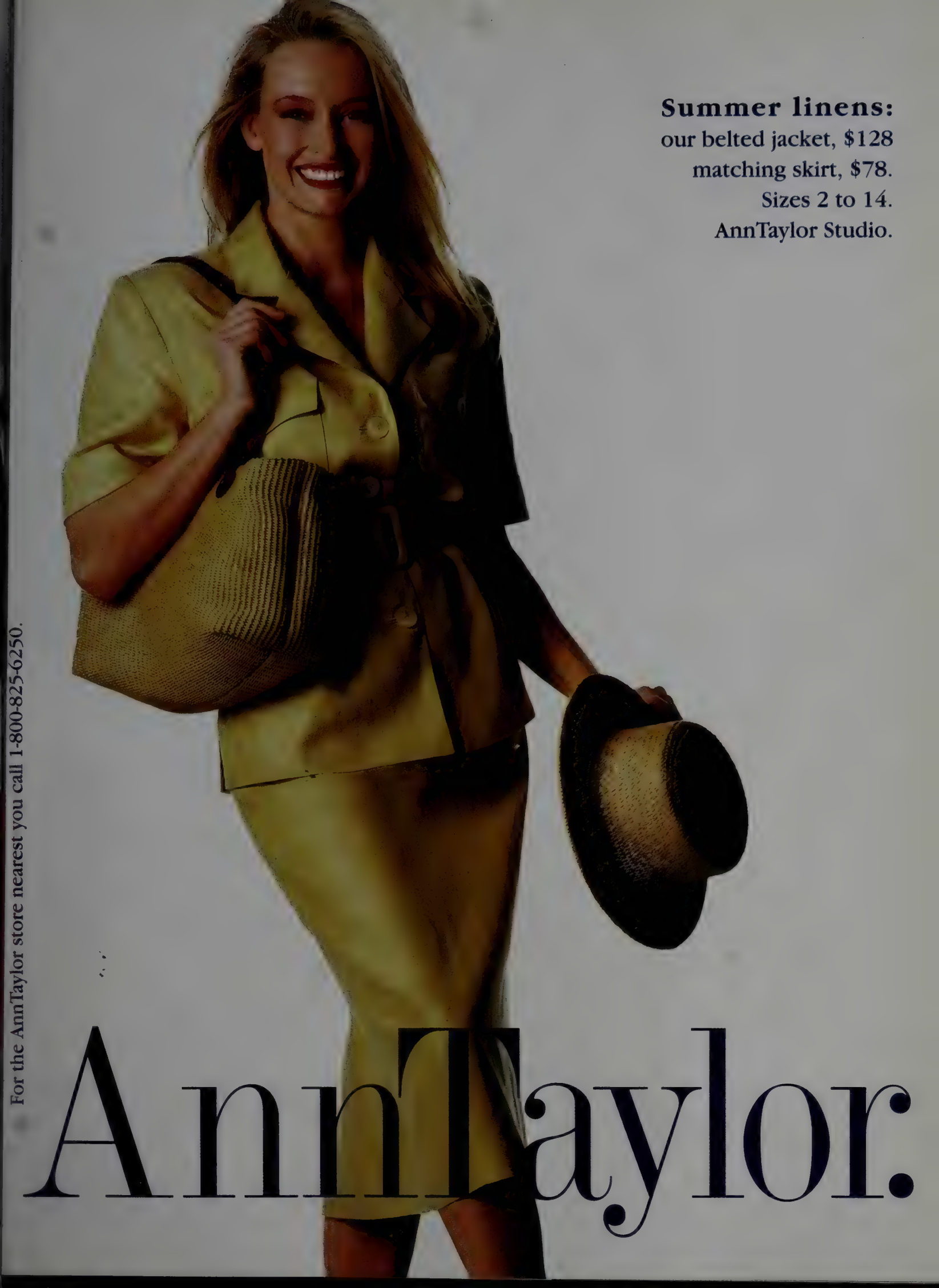
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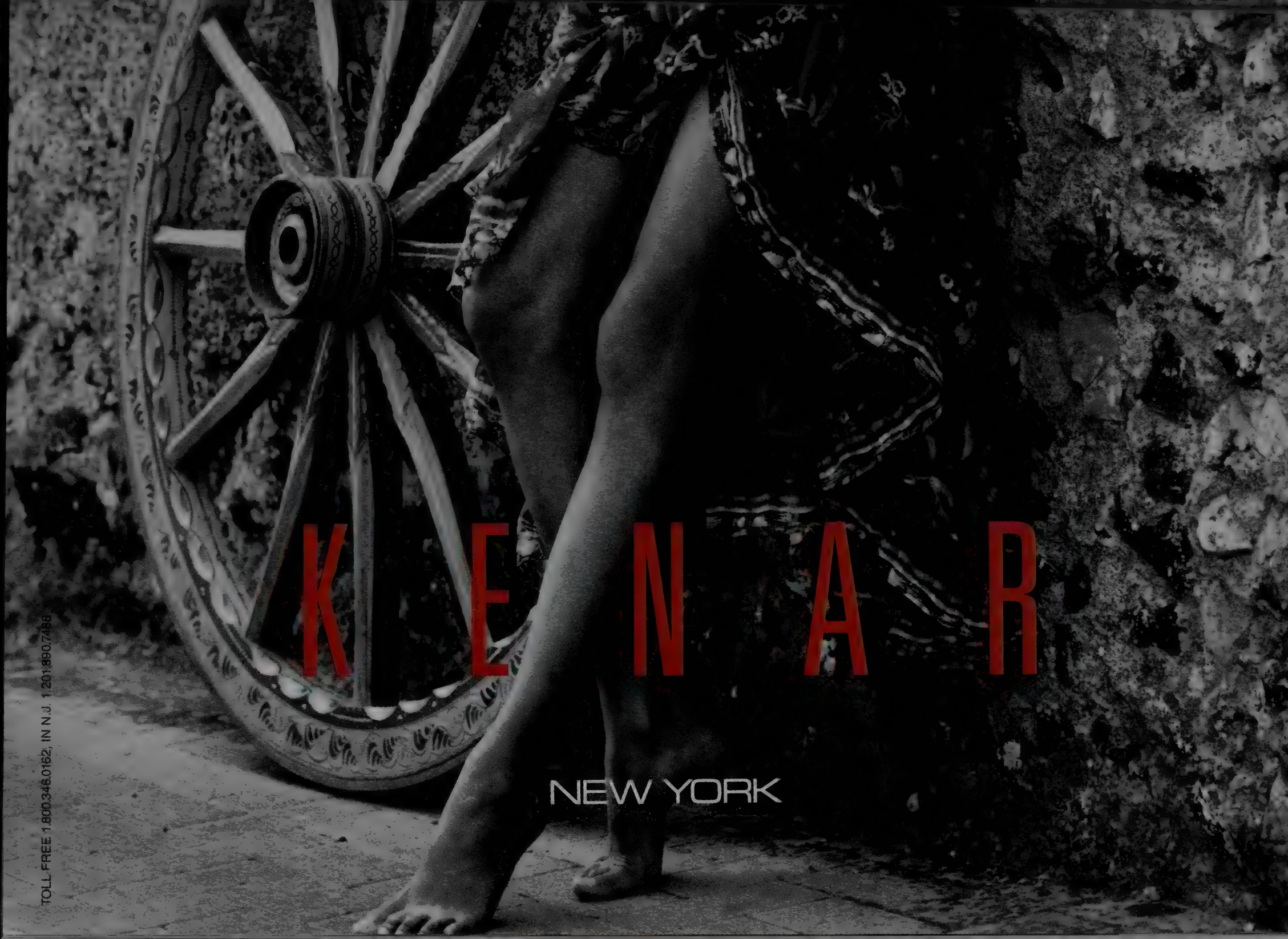

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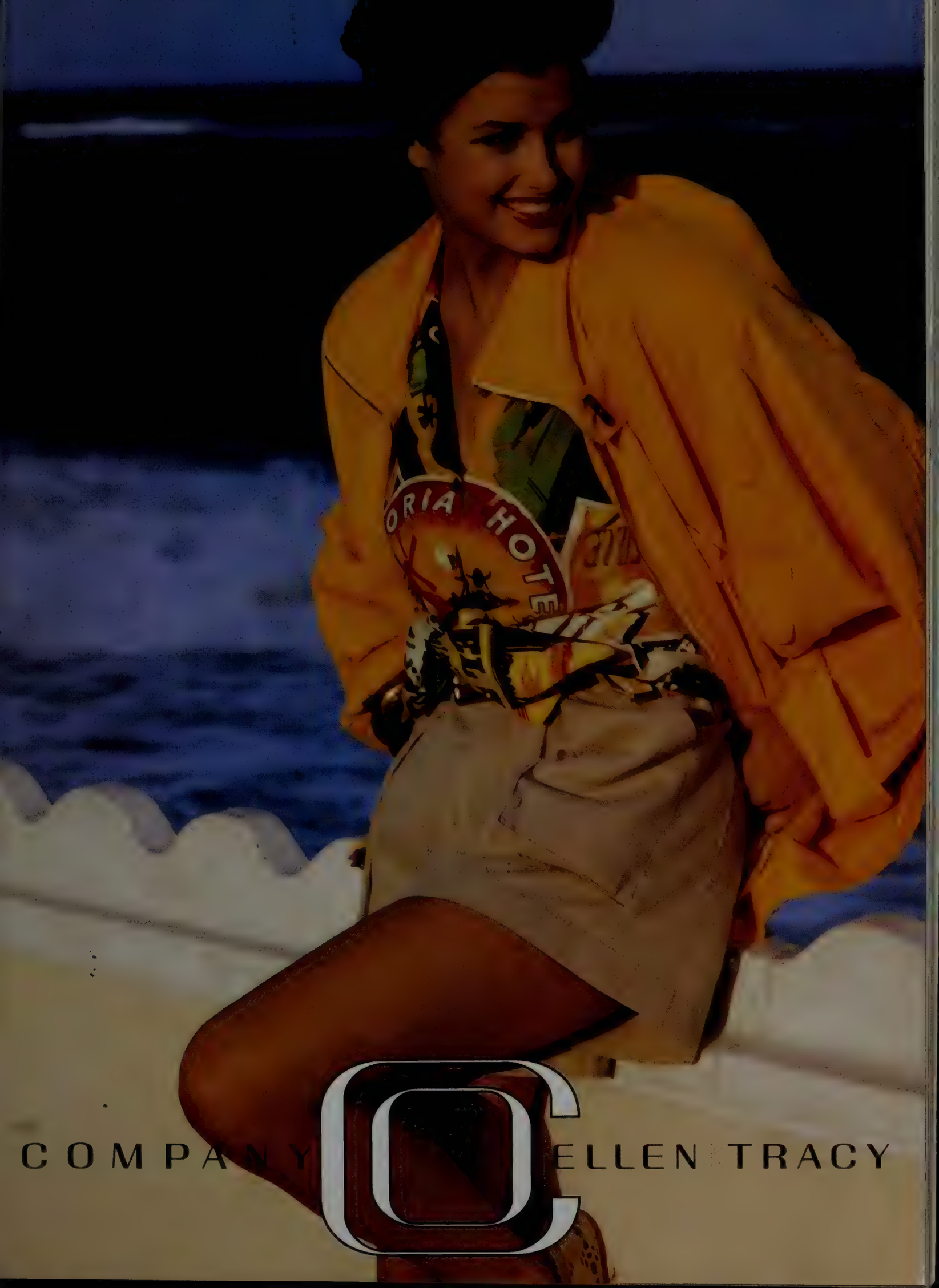

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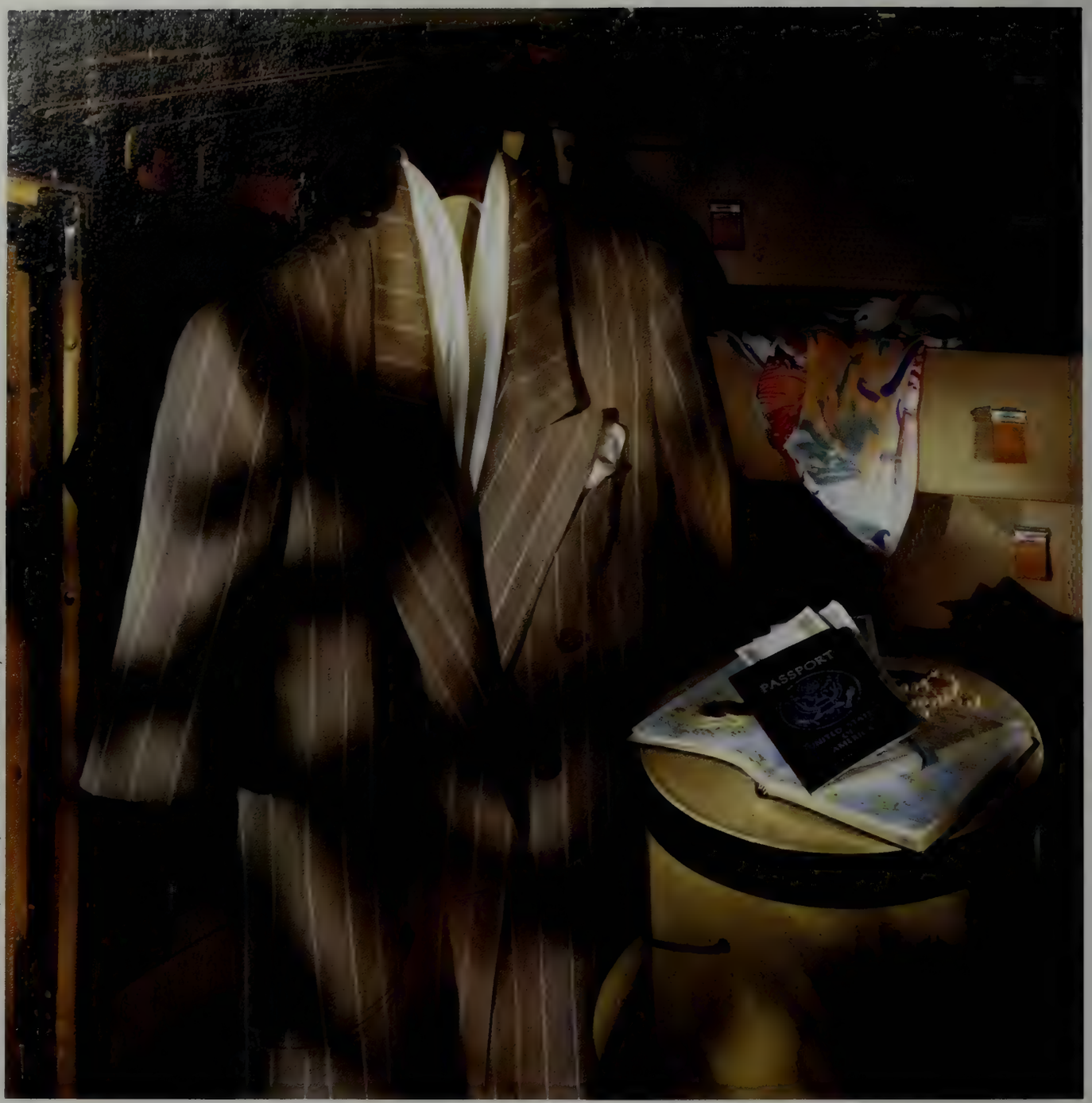

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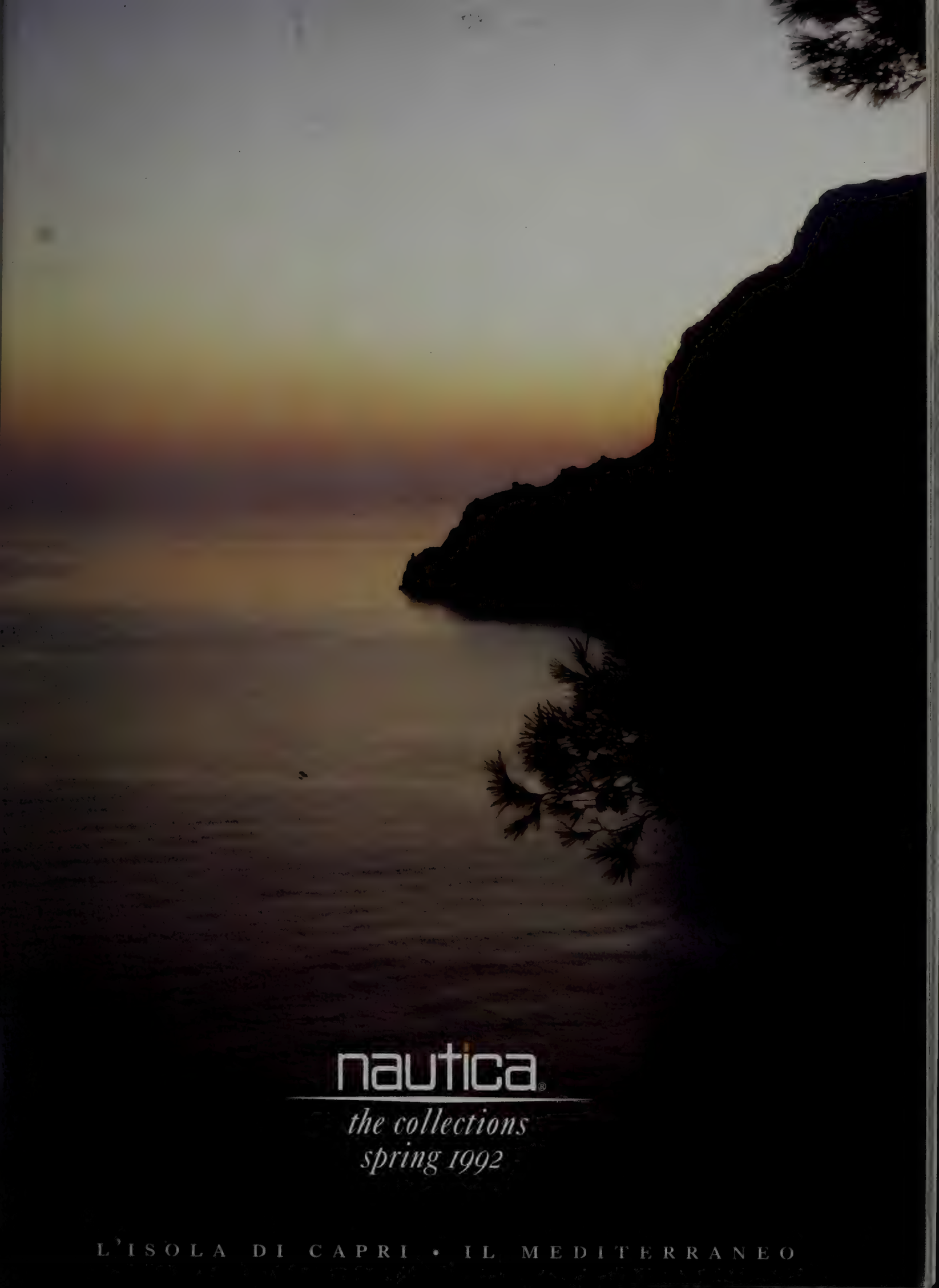

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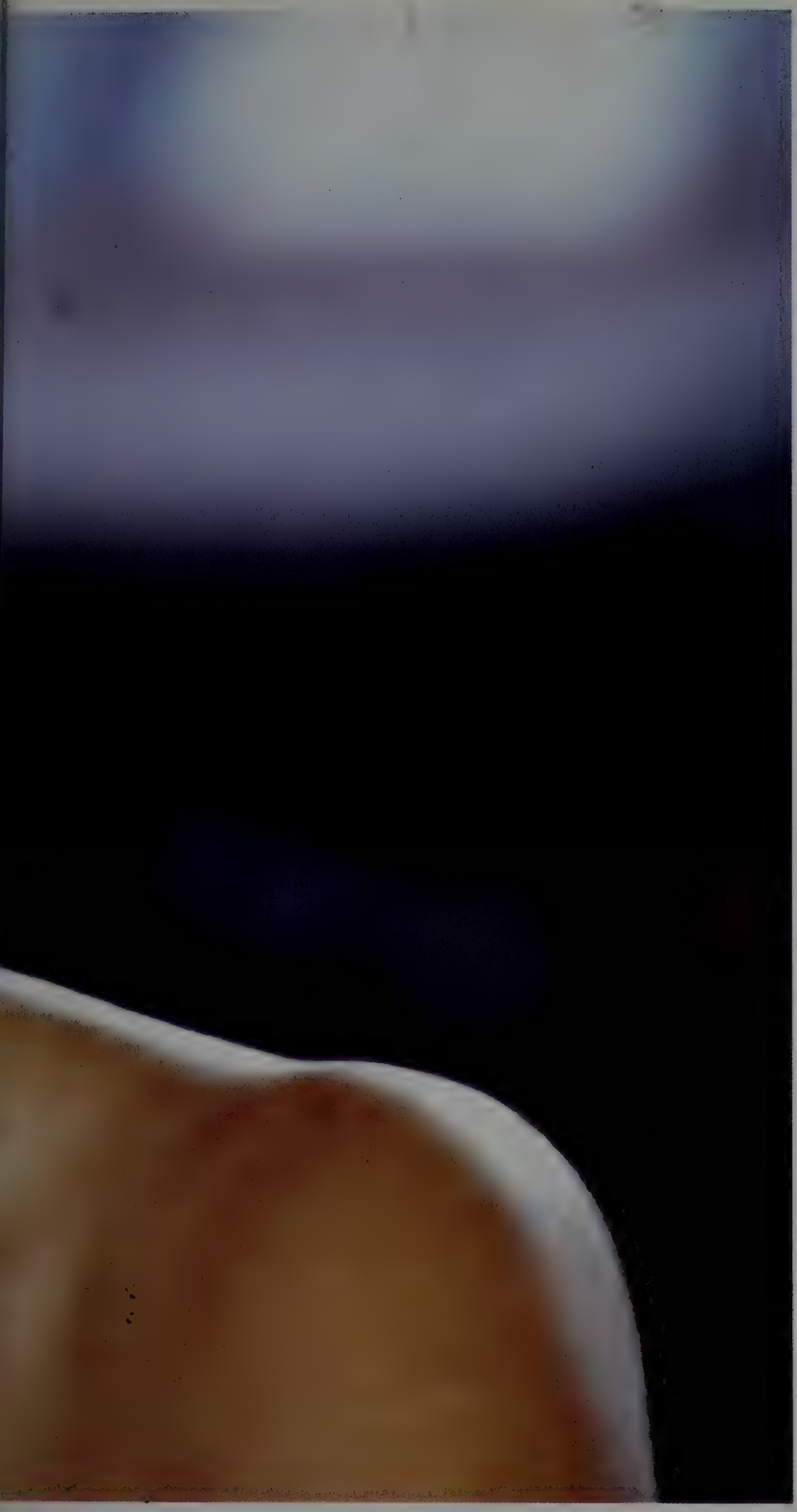

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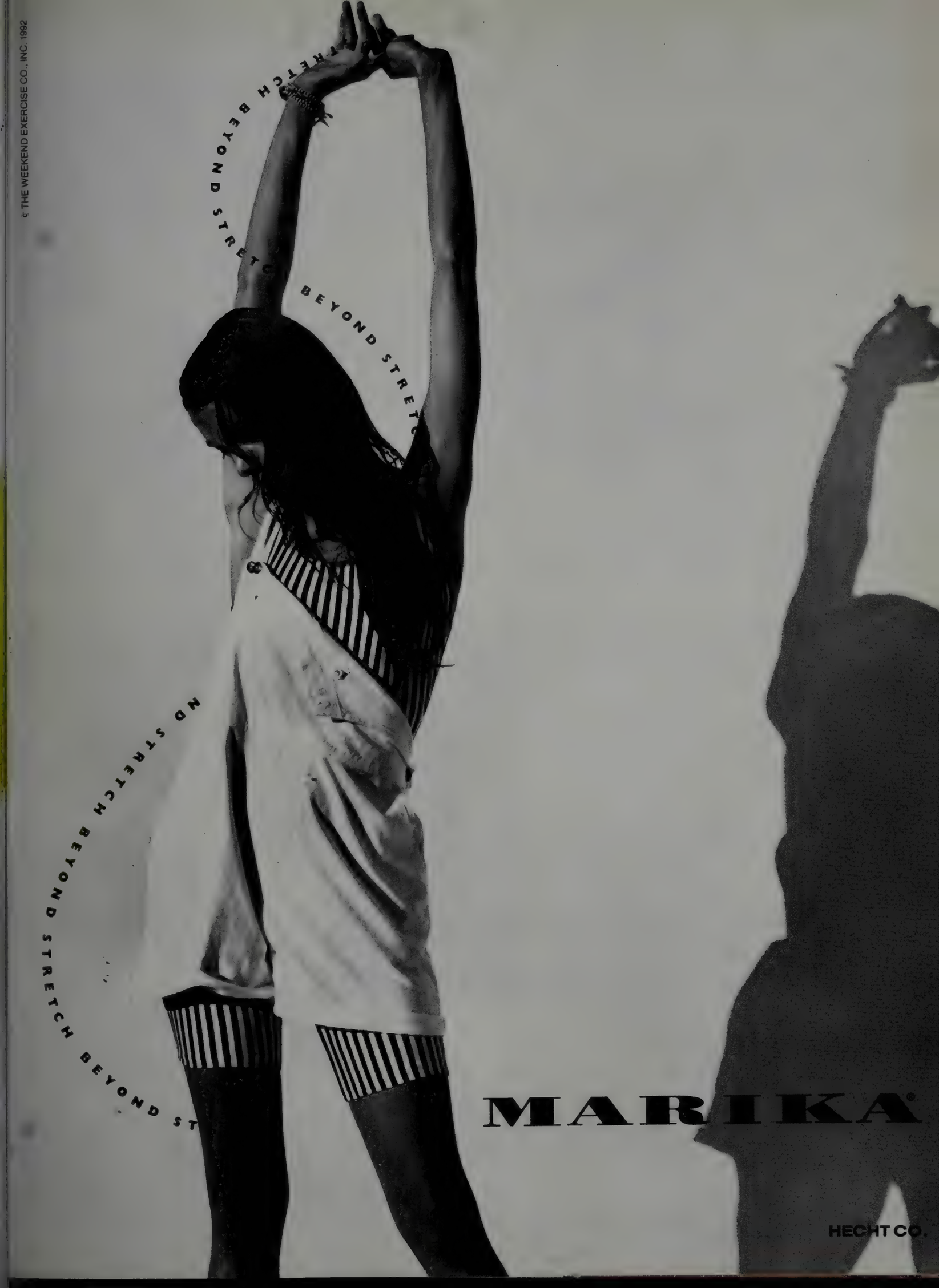

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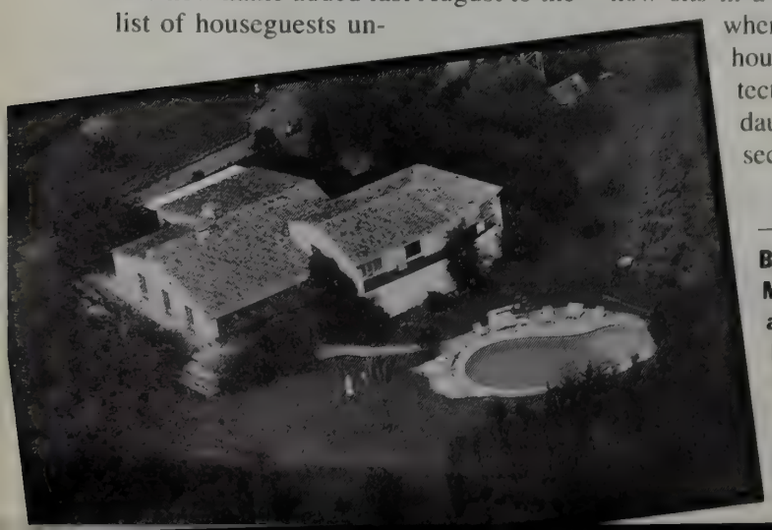
LIFE-STYLES OF THE RICH AND INFAMOUS

Thanks to France's open-door-to-despots policy, exiled tyrants are turning the Riviera into a new Gold Coast

BY FREDRIC DANNEN

"It is not my business to judge anyone," says the headwaiter at the Moulin de Mougins, a three-star restaurant on the French Riviera. He is straining for a comment about a former patron, Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier, ex-dictator of Haiti, who has lived in the South of France since his overthrow in February 1986. "What can I tell you? He's quite charming. I'm sure he could have your head cut off most agreeably. It is all in the presentation." When the restaurant's owner Roger Vergé stops by the table, he smiles at the mention of Duvalier's name. Baby Doc was so fond of Vergé's cuisine that he had it delivered, paying the $2,000-a-day food bills in cash. But then Duvalier split with Haiti's former First Lady, Michèle Bennett Duvalier, and moved to another home farther down the Cannes autoroute. On a more positive note, President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, desperately clinging to power, may soon become the next dictator to take refuge on the Riviera. "Mobutu has a house in Cap Martin," Vergé points out, adding for good measure, "We are apolitical."

France has long played host to all manner of fallen potentates while the rest of the world turned up its collective nose. Even Omar Bongo, the president of Gabon, had refused Duvalier, reportedly declaring, "*Gabon n'est pas une poubelle*"—Gabon is not a garbage can. French officials are perhaps especially ticklish about royal asylum right now because of the giddy prospect of having another notorious exile in the South of France, turning the long coast road into a Boulevard of Broken Dictators. The new name added last August to the list of houseguests under *asile régalien* (literally "royal asylum") was that of General Michel Aoun, commander in chief of the Christian Maronite forces in Lebanon. France has traditionally supported the Maronites, and President François Mitterrand said that giving Aoun refuge was "a matter of honor." The Mad General, having waged a bloody and futile "War of Liberation" against Syria, and then a bloodier and even more senseless "War of Unification" against his fellow Christians, now sits in a safe house in Marseilles, where he remains under virtual house arrest, for his own protection. (His wife and three daughters live under heavy security near Paris.)



Baby, it's you: Jean-Claude and Michèle Duvalier, *top*, attending a concert on the Riviera in 1988. *Left*, the villa they rented in Mougins before parting company.

The argument made in favor of France's hospitality toward tyrants is the same one advanced by the U.S. State Department in accepting Ferdinand Marcos: if you offer a safe and comfortable haven to a dictator, it may encourage him to leave power and avert further bloodshed. Despite this splendid rationale, it is difficult to find anyone in the French government willing to discuss the subject. Even Daniel Bernard, chief spokesman for the Quai d'Orsay, France's foreign ministry, a man who usually loves to cross swords with American journalists, declined to discuss his nation's dictators-in-residence program.

Those of a cynical turn of mind will tell you that France's motives are more pragmatic than humanitarian. For one thing, dictators-in-residence tend to be large importers of their nations' wealth. Mobutu is a case in point: he is said to have amassed a personal fortune of $5 billion, about the size of Zaire's national debt. The son of a hotel cook, Mobutu has been Zaire's absolute despot for

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nearly three decades and still insists that, despite the civil and military unrest that has torn apart his nation of nearly 40 million, he has no plans to step down. But last fall his private plane carried one of his two wives and other family members to the Villa del Mare, his four-story pink-and-white marble palace in Cap Martin. Mobutu once used the spectacular home—on twenty-five acres, complete with helipad—to host an unsuccessful peace conference on behalf of Angola. He also reportedly owns the Château Fond'roy, near Brussels, mansions in Paris and Switzerland, a castle in Spain, and a ranch in Portugal.

Several of Mobutu's allies, including France, have recently cut off financial aid in order to pressure him to accept democratic reforms. Yet there is no reason to believe that France would forbid Mobutu to settle in Cap Martin or Paris, or question him too closely about the origins of the wealth he would bring. Nor was any real scrutiny applied to Baby Doc, whose arrival in France five weeks before a key election was an embarrassment to the Socialist government. The one notable disappointment from a consumerist standpoint has been Emperor Jean-Bédel Bokassa of the Central African Republic, the only head of state in recent memory to be tried for cannibalism.

In 1983, Bokassa took refuge in a château in Hardricourt, just west of Paris. While in power, Bokassa had had enormous wealth at his disposal; he had even given diamonds to former president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, the scandalous disclosure of which helped doom Giscard's re-election campaign in 1981. But in France, Bokassa was busted out. His water, telephone, and electricity were often shut off for nonpayment, and he refused to post bail for his three children when they were caught shoplifting. Either because he was bored or broke, he returned home to Bangui in 1986 and was sentenced to death, a sentence ultimately commuted to life in solitary confinement.

Of course, the presence of the Duvaliers is still a delicate subject, especially now that France is aggressively supporting one of the former despot's greatest foes, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. The revolutionary Roman Catholic priest, who took office in February 1991 as Haiti's first truly democratically elected president and was forced into exile by a military junta seven months later, has no stauncher ally than France. The French government even granted its ambassador a medal of honor for protecting Aristide's life during the coup. He has also become the pet cause of First Lady Danielle Mitterrand.

Whether Aristide will return to power remains an open question; Duvalier should know his own return is beyond the realm of possibility. The dull-witted fat boy with boot-shaped sideburns, who, just shy of nineteen, was thrust into office upon the sudden death of his sadistic father, François "Papa Doc" Duvalier, lasted fifteen years as "President for Life." His downfall was all but guaranteed in 1980 when he married a coarse-mouthed *mulatte*, Michèle Bennett, and then allowed her to loot the national treasury. The end came on February 7, 1986, amid rioting. When the Duvaliers disembarked in Grenoble, Prime Minister Laurent Fabius declared that Baby Doc would be permitted to remain on French soil for eight days at most. That was six years ago.

France has long played host to all manner of fallen potentates while the rest of the world turned up its collective nose.

Those years in exile have not been kind to Duvalier. The tubby ex-dictator has moved through a series of homes, each less luxurious than the last. He appears to be paying for his female companionship these days, having filed for divorce from his wife after she humiliated him with a highly public love affair. She, meanwhile, is contesting the divorce—she wants more money—and now lives in Paris with a rich Lebanese arms merchant and her son and daughter by Baby Doc. Every fortnight he goes up to Paris to spend a weekend with his children and to see a medical specialist—he is diabetic and, according to his lawyer, also has a thyroid condition. Duvalier will be forty this year. He seems a prime candidate for a mid-life crisis.

It is even possible, though not terribly likely, that Duvalier is running out of money. He is known to have diverted at least $120 million from the Haitian treasury into his own foreign bank accounts, and is suspected of having taken more, though how much more is anyone's guess. Today, he has at least one foreign bank account with a large chunk of liquid capital. Samir Mourra, a Haitian of Syrian extraction who is distantly related to the family of Michèle Duvalier, functions as Baby Doc's courier. Every six weeks, Mourra disappears for a day and returns with a valise full of cash in the trunk of his car—an estimated $100,000 per trip.

Baby Doc now lives in Villa Melica, a two-story stonework house in Vallauris, a small, quiet burg near Cannes. He shares his home with Mourra, a few *minables*—poor friends and relatives from Haiti—and domestics. One neighbor who has seen the inside of the villa describes it as modest in size, a bit vulgar in décor. Baby Doc rents it furnished from Théodore De Mel, the Ivory Coast's former ambassador to London. It is said that, after an unsightly crack appeared in the living-room wall, Duvalier stopped paying his rent.

Last summer Baby Doc threw himself a birthday celebration at a hotel on the Cap d'Antibes, but apart from that, he appears to do no entertaining. His days seem to consist of sleeping late, having a long lunch at one of the restaurants on the Croisette—a touristy promenade in Cannes—and then returning to the same beachfront for the nightlife. Neighbors often see him driving his BMW, always alone, a blank expression on his face. Now and then, a taxi pulls up to the villa and deposits a young Niçoise with long blond hair ("a tart," one neighbor sniffs). Three nights a week on average, Duvalier ends up at La Chunga, a tacky Latin-style piano bar across from the Martinez hotel, where, on a recent evening, a bad Tom Jones imitator played an electronic keyboard and sang American pop standards such as "Mrs. Robinson" with an impenetrable French accent. Dressed in a business suit, Duvalier sits listening, looking grim and determined, until the early hours of the morning.

From his drawing room at the Villa Gaby, high atop a seawall on the Corniche Kennedy in Marseilles, General Aoun has a panoramic view of the ocean, and of the cadre of riot troops and municipal police armed with carbines and semi-automatics who patrol out in front. Metal barriers obstruct a long stretch of sidewalk beneath the dignified manse of yellow and white stucco, forcing pedestrians to walk along the ocean, where they must pass through a

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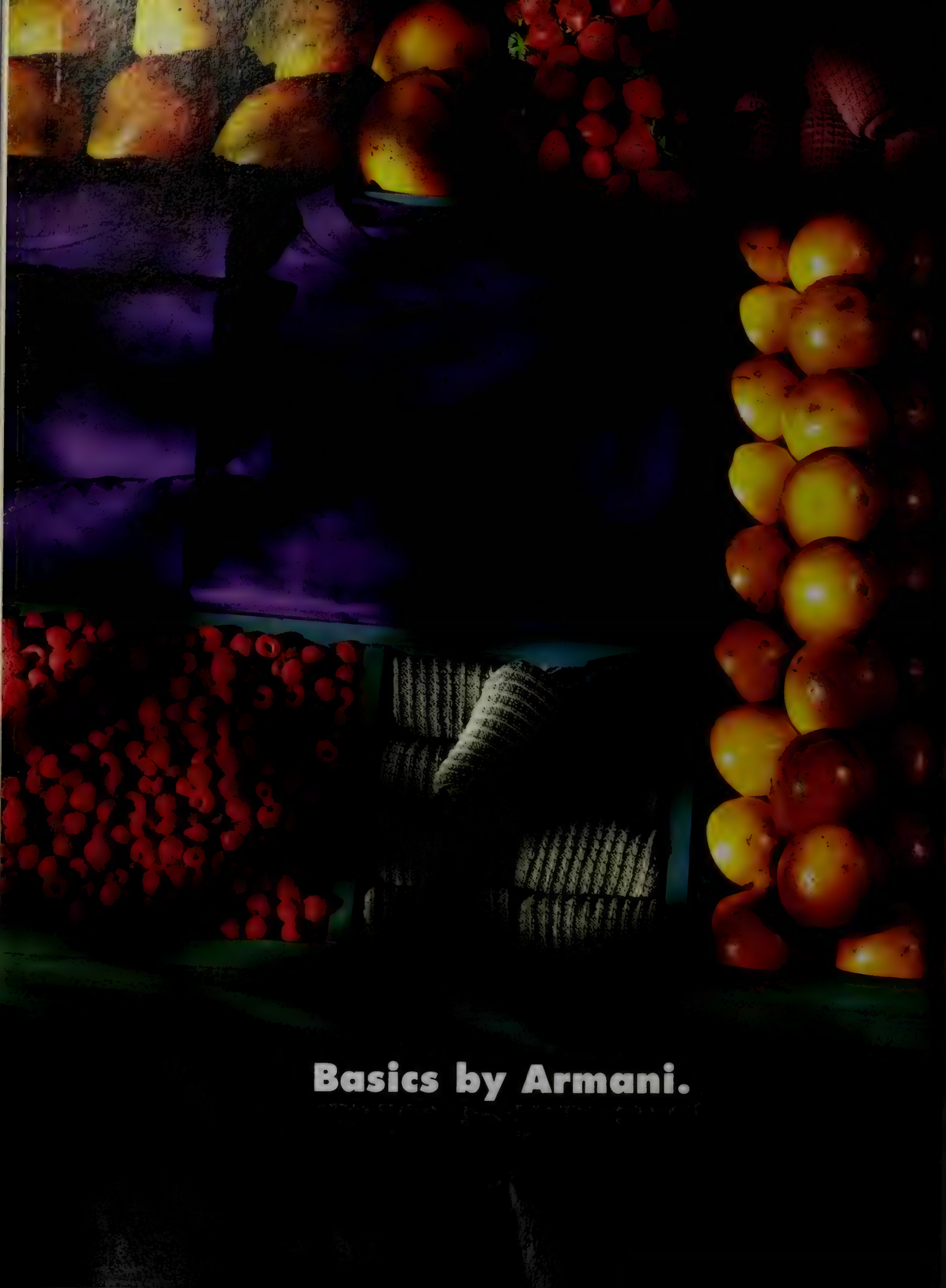
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gauntlet of security men. The seafront has the air of an armed camp.

While the United States charged the Shah of Iran for his protection when he visited an American hospital, French security comes free, though the price is often enforced silence. This has proved difficult for Michel Aoun, a man whose pomposity won him the nickname "Napolaoun."

While Baby Doc left Haiti a far richer man than Michel Aoun left Lebanon, one should not underestimate the generalissimo's resources. Two years ago, the French satirical weekly *Le Canard Enchaîné* disclosed that he had two bank accounts at the Banque Nationale de Paris totaling more than $15 million.

The question of Aoun's financial resources will resurface if his followers in France manage to purchase him a new home. One residence that has reportedly been considered is Lou Soubran, a mansion near Nice that used to belong to Jacques Médecin, the city's mayor. (In September 1990, Médecin, who had been mayor for almost twenty-five years and a virtual monarch on the Riviera, became France's own king in exile when customs officials found $140,000 in cash in his luggage. He took refuge in Uruguay rather than face charges of embezzlement.) When asked whether his people have indeed placed a bid on the Médecin house, Aoun is vague: "Yes, I heard that, too. I read it in the newspapers. But, you know, I have no money. And, anyway, if I had money it would not go toward buying houses."

Aoun is speaking by telephone, in open defiance of the gag order placed on him by the French government. A few days later, he suddenly does broach the possibility of becoming a homeowner in France. "We are looking at a house in Orléans. You know Orléans? It is where Joan of Arc became famous. She was a legend. I too am a legend. Now Orléans will have two legends. Isn't that right?"

Exile on Main Street: Michel Aoun's Marseilles manse, *left*, and the general on his balcony, *below*.

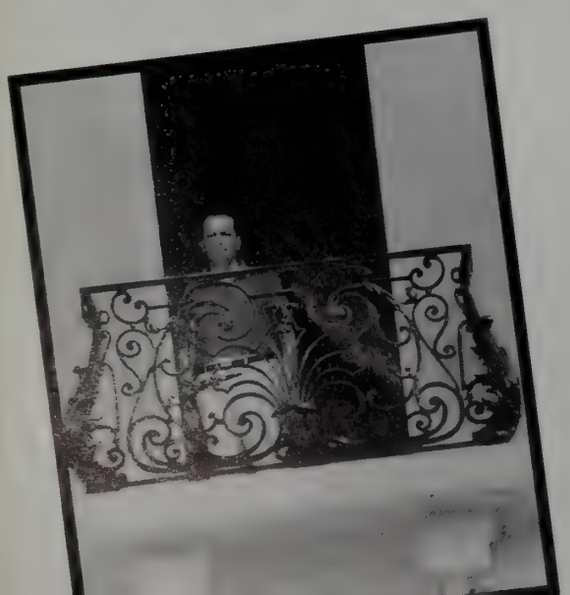
Dictators-in-residence tend to be large importers of their nations' wealth. Mobutu is said to have amassed a personal fortune of $5 billion.

It is an uncommon flash of humor for the fifty-six-year-old Aoun—that is, if he's joking. His confinement at the Villa Gaby has clearly demoralized him. Aoun's distinctive voice, with its menacing lilt, has lost its energy. He is a general without a battleground, reduced to puttering around the large house in his civvies. Unlike the other Christian militiamen, who wore T-shirts over their fatigues, Aoun's men always dressed, like their boss, in the full Lebanese-army uniform. Aoun's thick fatigues also helped hold in his waist—the tough, compact figure had started to spread in middle age. A recent visitor found him wearing loafers and an old cardigan, with bags under his eyes, looking as drawn and exhausted as a man with a heart condition.

Aoun had wanted a face-to-face interview; it sounded as though he would have been glad for company. Reached from a pay phone a block from the Villa Gaby, he immediately made an appointment for the following morning. But the next morning came, and it proved impossible to get through to the general on his private phone line. His link to the outside world was out of order. Another number at the villa was answered by a French official. There will be no interview, he said. No reason was given.

It was a cruel twist for Aoun to have someone else barring his doors against visitors. For two years, he had barricaded himself inside the presidential palace at Baabda, just outside Beirut. A butcher's son who rose rapidly through the military, Aoun had become Lebanon's acting head of state by default in September 1988, when President Amin Gemayel failed to win a plurality. Gemayel is said to have anointed Aoun fifteen minutes before heading for the airport to spend his retirement—and some of his estimated billion dollars in embezzled funds—in, of all places, Paris. About a year later, fifty-eight constitutionally elected Christian M.P.'s gathered at a disused air base in Lebanon to vote for a new president, despite a warning from Aoun that those who did so might place their lives in danger. They chose René Moawad, a man instantly denounced by Aoun as a pro-Syrian stooge. On the dusty grounds outside the palace, Aoun's guards tethered an old donkey and painted on its flank the words I LOVE MOAWAD in Arabic. Moawad was too frightened to venture back into Christian East Beirut. He took refuge outside the city for a few weeks, then embarked for mostly Muslim West Beirut for inauguration ceremonies. On his way there, his car was blown up by a bomb; he died instantly.

Moawad's death left Syrian-backed Elias Hrawi in charge. But Aoun faced another challenge, too—from his fellow Christians, the 10,000-strong Phalangist militia. By early 1990, Syrian forces were able to settle back and enjoy the spectacle of two Christian factions killing each other. In October, Aoun finally capitulated to Hrawi and was spirited to the French Embassy—apparently, as Robert Fisk of *The Independent* put it, "preferring coffee with the French am-



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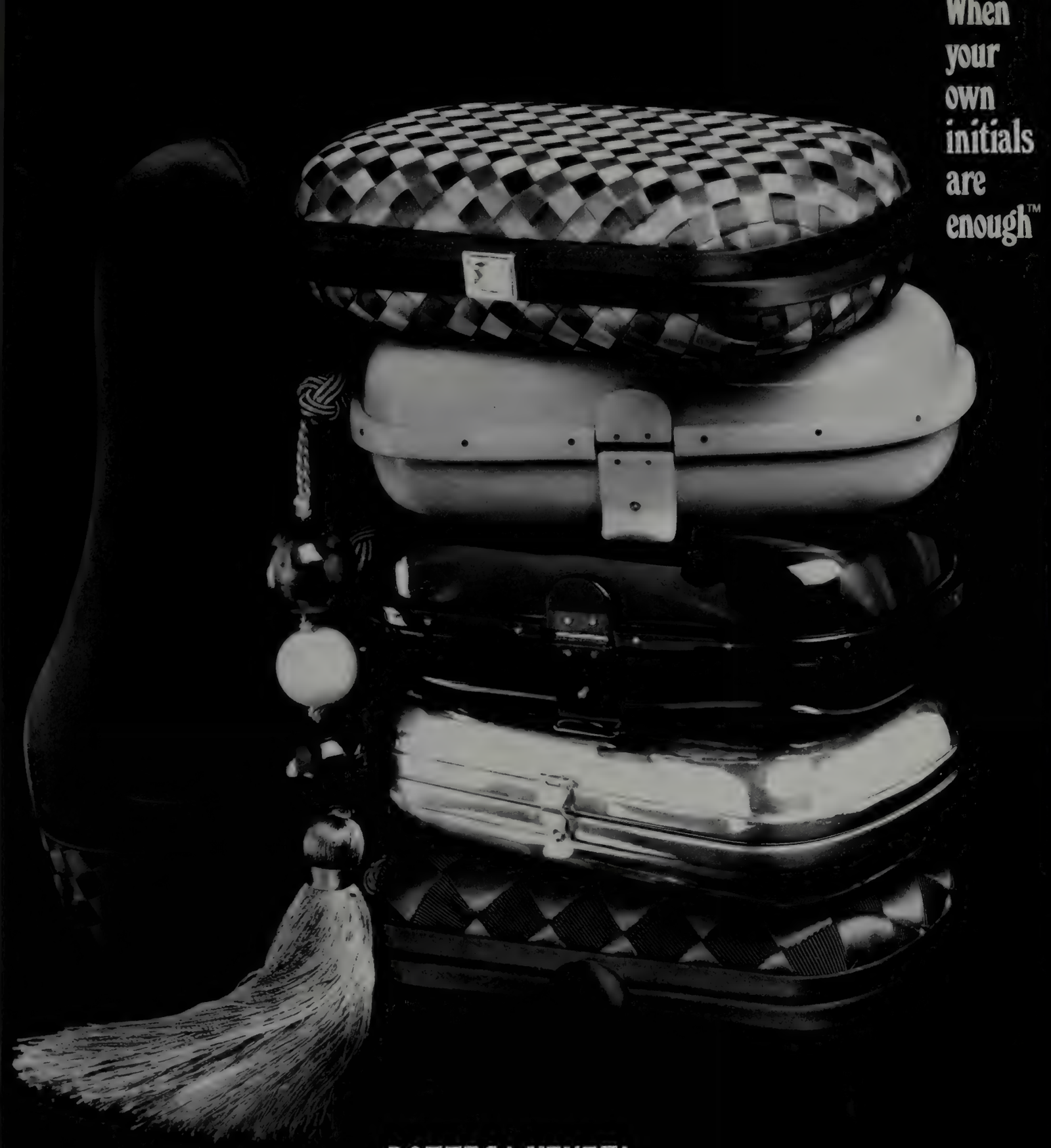

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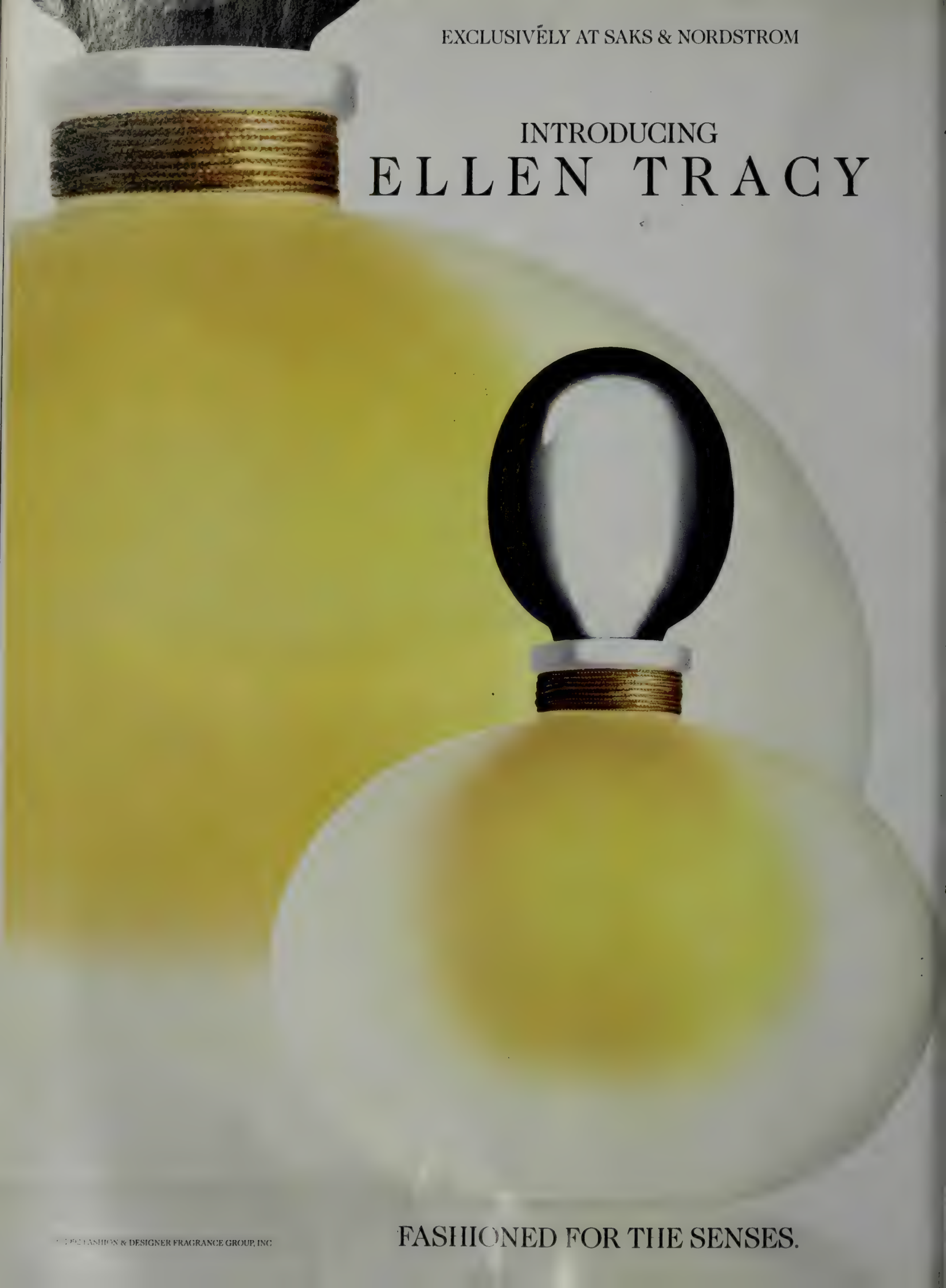

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bassador to falling on his sword." He remained there for ten months before the Lebanese government granted him a "special pardon" and a forty-eight-hour safe-conduct pass. A convoy drove him to a naval base in northern Beirut, where he was put on an inflatable speedboat and taken to a submarine two miles offshore, bound for Cyprus.

No sooner had Aoun arrived in Marseilles than French foreign minister Roland Dumas appeared on television to express his "pleasure" at the general's arrival, once again baffling the rest of the world over the vagaries of French foreign policy. France had officially backed President Hrawi, though Aoun remained enormously popular with the French people, who seemed to share the belief of the general's die-hard Maronite loyalists that his goal was to unite all of Lebanon into one Christian-led democracy. At a press conference a few days after Aoun's arrival, President Mitterrand acknowledged that the general's policies had sadly pitted Christian against Christian and strengthened the grip of foreign armies on Lebanese soil. He offered no insight into France's eagerness to welcome him.

Now, after more than a year in French custody, Aoun is bored. In what will become an almost daily discourse on the phone, Aoun requests books: the first two volumes of William Manchester's biography of Winston Churchill, and *The Samson Option,* Seymour Hersh's recent exposé of Israel's nuclear capability. "That Hersh, he has really made a noise there," Aoun says. The general is struggling to keep up with current events—he inquires about the Middle East peace talks and rumors that Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Shamir will step down and spark an early general election. This seems a good idea to Aoun. "Elections are very important. The people must decide. That is what the biblical notion of the shepherd is all about. A shepherd cannot abandon his flock, so a leader must not turn his back on his people." Apparently, political asylum has dulled the general's sense of irony.

Above all, Aoun sounds annoyed with the French, who have saved him from almost certain assassination. One afternoon, before considering his move to Orléans, he is struck by another thought entirely. "What is the weather in London? Is it cold, raining? Will they take me in England? Ask them for me, will you? *Please*. But maybe I should wait until the weather is warmer.

"If I have done wrong," Aoun says, "then let the world know about it. Let me be put before a jury. But you can't condemn me to silence like this. You cannot hold a man like this. I want to get out. I want to get out of here."

Eighty-five miles east of Aoun's fortress home, Pierre Donnet, the mayor of Vallauris, is reclining in a black Eames chair behind his semicircular desk at the town hall. He seems a bit taken aback by the subject at hand.

"Jean-Claude Duvalier? I was never officially informed of his presence in my town. For me, his existence is anonymous. I have never met him. . . . No one has discussed him with me, eh? Not the prefecture, not the police, not the Renseignements Généraux [French federal police]. . . This is a decision that comes from the state, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since I was never informed officially of anything, I don't even know if his residence is surveilled in my town. Evidently, it's a surveilled residence, and he has accounts to render to the police. *I don't know.*"

Every six weeks, Baby Doc's courier disappears for a day and returns with a valise full of cash—an estimated $100,000 per trip.

Still, Donnet is being a good sport about it, or perhaps he really doesn't care all that much. By contrast, in March 1986, when Duvalier arrived with his entourage at their first home, a ten-room villa in Grasse, the local mayor, Hervé de Fontmichel, was in an uproar. No one had informed him either, and in a statement published in the Riviera's leading newspaper, *Nice-Matin,* he declared that "the population, the municipal council, and I are outraged at this show of force, born of the alliance between the current Socialist government and Mr. Duvalier. . . . My position is quite clear: I reprove this decision." So did a number of locals, who picketed and scribbled anti-Duvalier graffiti on walls.

Duvalier apparently has never felt the need to defend himself, and he long ago stopped giving interviews. One of his last, which appeared in *Paris Match* in February 1988, contained few surprises, apart from his unexpected fondness for the nickname Baby Doc. He blamed his downfall on a host of unfair and exogenous variables, from a hostile American press and State Department ("Foreign affairs is not the forte of American politics") to racism and the effect of the AIDS scare on tourism ("We are the four bad *h*'s: homosexuals, heroin junkies, hemophiliacs, and Haitians"). He could find no fault with himself or his wife. "Michèle is very beautiful and thus very much envied. The people loved her. It was necessary to attack her to bring me down."

Not that he had ever sought or been groomed for the presidency. "The son of a bitch never told me anything," Baby Doc once said of his father, according to Elizabeth Abbott's richly detailed history, *Haiti: The Duvaliers and Their Legacy*. Jean-Claude, the only boy of four children, was five years old when Papa Doc took power in 1957 in a rigged election and moved his family into the National Palace in Port-au-Prince. Nicknamed "Fat Potato" and "Baskethead," the young Duvalier vied to be last in his class, until, legend has it, he forced the teachers to stop posting his grades. François Duvalier had little time for his son, apart from occasionally storming into his room to unplug the record player.

Papa Doc was not only a man of brutality—he ordered schoolchildren to witness political executions and liked to commune with the severed heads of his enemies—but a thief on a spectacular scale. He had risen to power on a campaign of *noirisme*—Haiti's black majority had long been oppressed by the nation's mulattoes—then sold black Haitians into virtual slavery, for $1 million a year, to work on the sugar plantations of light-skinned Dominicans.

The oldest child, Marie-Denise—"Sister Doc"—was far more intelligent and ambitious than her brother, and the odds-on favorite to succeed their father. But in 1971, Duvalier, now terminally ill, was warned by his advisers that Haitians would not tolerate a young woman as president. Posters soon appeared on walls and billboards everywhere, showing a frail Papa Doc resting a hand on his son's beefy shoulder, with the caption: "I have chosen him." François Duvalier died on April 21, a week after his sixty-fourth birthday. Baby Doc was so distraught—more likely from the shock of

Yes, this is a goddess

but you are not a goddess and you aren't ever going to be a goddess so maybe you should just get used to it. You'll never be perfect *(sorry)* and you're not worshipped *(usually)* and does this matter? No.

Goddesses are worshipped because they aren't real and they aren't us and they aren't allowed to complain. Goddesses are worshipped even though *(and this is important)* they are really stone and really plaster and, more often than not, really dead.

And yes they will never grow old and they will never grow up and they will stay that way *(stay that way stay that way)*. This, however, is not the way you will stay.

Because someday, since you are human, you will notice that time has passed and you are not who you were twenty years ago or ten years ago or even last week. Someday, since you are human, you will notice your body has changed and your face has changed and your kneecaps look more like *(continued)*

Winston Churchill than ever before.

Do not be alarmed.

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But you won't.

And as you move you will learn to rejoice in your body because it is yours and no one else's. You will learn to rejoice in being imperfect because perfect is such a *complete and utter* bore. You will learn to rejoice in your kneecaps because they are your kneecaps and they have seen the world.

And the goddesses, from some high and chilly mountaintop, will be jealous of you. Let them.

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finding himself the new *Président à Vie* [illegible] from grief—that he took an overdose of Valium and missed the funeral.

The young president appeared to devote more time to his favorite hobbies—racing cars and motorcycles, hunting, and sleeping with every available female—than to governing his country. The Tontons Macoute, his father's ruthless civil militia, still terrorized the populace, and Baby Doc left most decisions to his mother, Simone "Mama Doc" Duvalier—that is, until another woman came along to shove her aside. Michèle Bennett first encountered the president-to-be as a twelve-year-old classmate at Collège Bird, near the palace. In 1963 a failed assassination attempt on Baby Doc and his sister Simone, which claimed the lives of their three bodyguards and chauffeur, occurred in front of the school. Alarmed, Michèle's father spirited her off to St. Mary's Convent in Peekskill, New York. She later moved to Manhattan, working for a family that manufactured slippers for big-footed women. Michèle returned to Haiti in the late seventies as a divorcée with two sons and a reputation for her sexual prowess. After she and Baby Doc were paired up at the Duvalier ranch, he supposedly announced that he had finally met his match. Their wedding in 1980 made the *Guinness Book of World Records* as one of the costliest ever.

The First Lady's indulgences became legendary. Preferring Miami's flowers to her nation's own, she had them flown in at a cost of $50,000 a month. A refrigeration unit was installed in the palace to preserve her growing supply of fur coats, acquired on million-dollar shopping sprees in New York and Paris, and her collection of jewels required a mobile vault. "She didn't think of her country as anything except a cookie jar," says an investigator who worked for post-Duvalier Haiti.

The United States turned on the dictator in early 1986, with White House spokesman Larry Speakes mistakenly announcing that Duvalier had left Haiti. Panicking, Jean-Claude got on the airwaves to announce that he was still "strong as a monkey's tail," but a week later the Duvalier clan threw a final champagne party, then drove to the airport, where a U.S. Air Force C-141 was waiting to carry them to France.

When the plane touched down in Grenoble, the local *préfet*, a mere civil servant, was the highest-ranking French official there to greet Duvalier. A week later, on February 14, he was hit with an order of expulsion, signed by Interior Minister Pierre Joxe. Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Roland Dumas wrote a letter to U.S. secretary of state George Shultz that said, in effect: *You* take him. But apart from providing the plane to remove him from Port-au-Prince, the United States, which had its hands full with the Marcos problem, wanted nothing to do with Baby Doc. Negotiations to get Liberia to accept Duvalier fell through. In any case, according to Philippe Madelin, a reporter for Télévision Française at work on a book about the stolen wealth of former dictators, France's efforts to expel Duvalier were "a ruse for the sake of public opinion. In reality, the French government had decided to give him royal asylum. It was a decision of state."

"We are looking at a house in Orléans," says Aoun. "It is where Joan of Arc became famous. She was a legend. Now Orléans will have two legends."

Evidently, a deal had been negotiated by Baby Doc's high-powered French lawyer, Sauveur Vaisse. Once a radical who defended Algerian rebels against the government of de Gaulle, Vaisse was recruited by Papa Doc in the late sixties to serve a cause rather less heroic: he persuaded the French courts to ban the film version of Graham Greene's *The Comedians*, a scathing portrait of Papa Doc's Haiti. Now in his late fifties, with a grizzled beard that makes him look like a Marseilles fisherman, Vaisse speaks eloquently of his attachment to the Duvalier cause. A typical pronouncement: "I became persuaded that a lot of the criticism of the regime of François Duvalier was racist."

Vaisse is less helpful in explaining the peculiar nature of Baby Doc's status in France. Duvalier has no official papers or identity card, and one presumes that his Haitian diplomatic passport is no longer valid. For all practical purposes, he is a nonperson. The only documents issued him by the French government have been Joxe's expulsion order and a contradictory order issued three days later, called an *assignation à résidence*. This is a writ that requires a person to live within a specific area—Duvalier was condemned to the Alpes-Maritimes, which includes the choicest section of the French Riviera.

It was just as well that Baby Doc and his dozen relatives and domestics had to leave Talloires, their first stop after Grenoble. Accommodations at the four-star Hôtel de l'Abbaye came to more than $12,000 a day. (Michèle paid with her Diners Club, American Express, and Visa Carte Bleue.) The Duvalier clan relocated to La Tourillière, a five-acre property with a swimming pool and tennis court, in Grasse. Baby Doc rented the house from Dutch businessman Hubertus Nijssen for about $7,000 a month. Perhaps because of the protests and anti-Duvalier graffiti, Baby Doc did not renew his lease, but instead moved on again, to Mohamedia, a villa in Mougins that belonged to Mohamed Khashoggi, son of arms merchant Adnan Khashoggi. Now his rent was down to $6,500 a month, but the villa was next to a lettuce farm and had small rooms.

In this cramped environment, the stage was set for marital strife. As it was, Baby Doc was having adjustment problems. Only twice in his life had he ventured outside Haiti, both times for brief visits to France. In a 1986 interview with *Vanity Fair*, Michèle mocked her husband's difficulty in distinguishing the sidewalk from the road and in performing such mentally taxing chores as telephoning for reservations at the Moulin de Mougins. Duvalier, who is terrified of snakes, found one swimming across his pool and would not use it again. The couple's children—three-year-old Nicolas and one-year-old Anya—were terrorizing the house. ("Anya, she's a hurricane," Michèle said at the time. "The other day she ate three lipsticks.")

The only relief from the boredom and tension, it seemed, was sex, in which both Jean-Claude and Michèle maintained a healthy interest, though not with each other. Jean-Claude was said to be discreet about his love affairs, keeping a bachelor's apartment in Cannes to entertain Haitian girlfriends he had flown in from Port-au-Prince and Miami. Michèle was less discreet. "She cheated on him in the most shocking way," says a Paris-based source who has known the couple for years. "She had a little boyfriend when she was eighteen years old. Now he's forty, and working at some job at a bank in Haiti. She paid his plane fare to Nice and spent a couple of days

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with him, this guy she hadn't seen for more than twenty years. And told Jean-Claude about it. It's rough, eh?''

All the same, Duvalier appeared to want to preserve his marriage, until another exiled Haitian began badgering him to get a divorce. Dr. Roger Lafontant, the former head of the Tontons Macoute, had long hated Michèle, first merely for being a mulatto and then for forcing him to marry his mistress in preparation for Pope John Paul II's 1983 visit to Haiti—he could not shake the hand of His Holiness, she insisted, if he was living in sin. Lafontant argued that Michèle's unpopularity had cost Baby Doc the presidency, and that it could be his again if he would leave her. ''Jean-Claude let himself be swayed by Lafontant, though the divorce was not really his wish,'' says a man who served under Duvalier. ''He loved his wife. I believe he still loves her.''

Lafontant tapped the ex-dictator for $400,000, more than enough to buy a divorce in the Dominican Republic without having to set foot there. (The actual cost of the bogus divorce decree, in fact, was a mere $14,000.) Michèle seemed perfectly willing to split with her husband of nine years, and promptly resumed using her maiden name. However, she was less than thrilled with the alimony set by the Dominican court: about $7,500 a month. She is now challenging the divorce in France on the grounds that her husband's documents are forgeries.

As for Lafontant, though he made a handsome profit as a divorce broker, the money was soon spent, and Baby Doc refused to give him any more. Short of funds, Lafontant defied an arrest warrant for treason and returned to Haiti. In January 1991, a few weeks after the election of Father Aristide, he briefly seized power in a bloodless coup—''I am the president now and we are very busy forming a new government,'' he told *The New York Times*—then was thrown in jail and later executed.

As for Baby Doc, his notoriety has largely faded. Cannes natives have become so indifferent to his presence that when they refer to him at all it is often as ''Papa Doc.'' Apart from a television camera at the front gate, there are no security measures in evidence at the Villa Melica—a dramatic contrast to the villa in Mougins, where a shotgun-wielding security man crouched behind a cypress tree, and Grasse, where the grounds were teeming with geese, guaranteed to launch into honking conniptions at the first sign of a trespasser. The only animal you are likely to encounter at the Melica is the caretaker's ancient, drooly-mouthed Doberman or one of Baby Doc's Chihuahuas.

The caretaker, a stocky former police *commissaire* with an iron-gray crew cut, is employed by the landlord, Ambassador De Mel, not by Duvalier, whom he apparently loathes. ''When the caretaker talks about Baby, he's always bitching,'' says a neighbor. ''He says Baby is rude, arrogant, and talks down to him like a servant. And he won't pay for things. The caretaker has a real problem trying to get the upkeep money out of him.''

''My husband—I call him my husband because we are still not divorced—they say he was a dictator. But they know that is not true. Aristide was the dictator.''

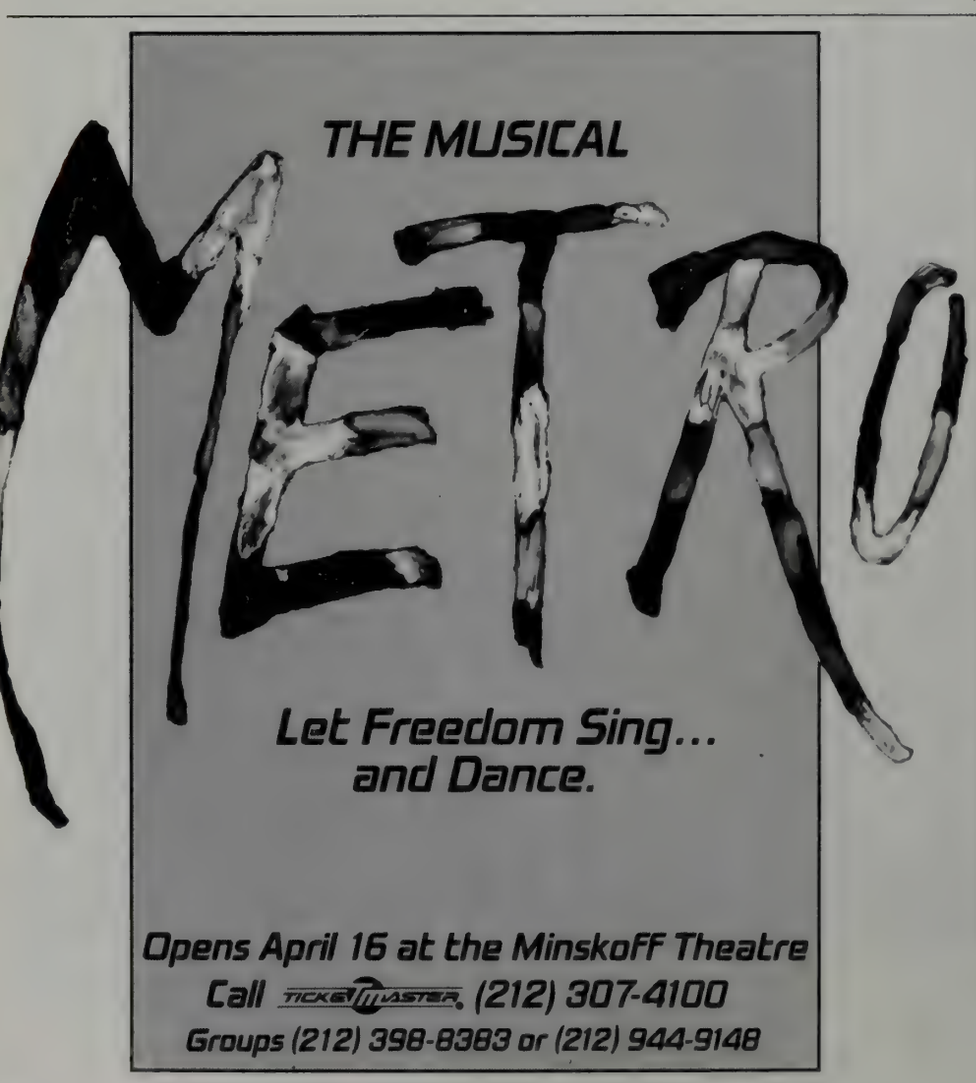
Six years of exile have done nothing to take the ginger out of Michèle Bennett. As she talks by phone from her Paris apartment, there is plenty of exuberance in her husky voice. And, as ever, a need to talk, even at the expense of her French hosts.

''France hasn't been doing well with foreign affairs,'' she says. ''And now the French are supporting Aristide. Mme. Mitterrand is pushing for that. . .*priest*. I'm more angry at the position of France than the United States. I know the United States didn't like Aristide, but as he was elected democratically, they had to say something positive. Although, you know, Haitians don't go to the polls. How can you have a democracy when you have so many illiterate people?''

Bennett puts her caller on hold and a set of chimes merrily plays ''Greensleeves.'' Moments later, she is back and on a tear: ''Sure, Aristide was popular. He's from the slums, like the people. . . . Politics, I was in it by accident. I have no political ambition for myself, and never did—unlike a lot of women. I don't criticize.''

With that, she signs off by reminding her caller that she no longer gives interviews.

It seems appropriate to pay an unsolicited call on Madame La Présidente. Her regal eagle nest is in the Sixteenth Arrondissement, on the Right Bank of the Seine, in one of those majestic old buildings with a foyer large enough for touch football. Monsieur Robert, a black manservant, opens the door to her apartment. Down the long red-carpeted corridor, one can observe with awe the Versailles-like touches—crystal chandeliers, a dramatic



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marble staircase, and floor-to-ceiling oil paintings that are either old Flemish masterworks or suitable replicas.

"What a surprise," Michèle Bennett says as her visitor is escorted in. She sits at an antique secretaire, doing her day's work, which consists of answering mail and making notes for her memoirs. A Pavarotti CD is playing on the stereo. There is no sign of her Lebanese arms-merchant consort, whose existence in her life she does not acknowledge—even one of her friends knows him only by his first name, Alexandre. No less ravishing than usual, and dripping with gold and precious stones, Bennett apologizes for not being "made up" to receive a visitor. She wears a knit chemise featuring the title characters from *One Hundred and One Dalmatians*, and it is hard to suppress the thought that with her cigarettes and love of furs she could have been a model for Cruella De Vil. Bennett chain-smokes Dunhills. "I need to quit. I'm losing my voice. I always had a hard voice, not really sweet like some women, but it's becoming worse because of cigarettes. The doctor told me I have very fragile vocal cords."

She must keep the conversation brief, she says, because it is almost time to take Anya to her ballet lesson. Baby Doc's daughter and son are now six and eight, and have calmed down a bit. The subject of her two other sons, in school in Miami, causes some distress. "I am not as yet able to leave the country," she says. "And the only thing that might bother me is that if my boys in the States need me I cannot go. So I touch wood they don't get sick.

"But," she continues, "I'm not a person who complains. We never had any problems in France. After Haiti, France is our second home. I'm leading a normal life. I have lots of friends that are French. Paris is beautiful and we are lucky to be here. Of course, I do miss Haiti. You know, there is nothing better than home."

Asked whether she misses her husband, Bennett smiles coquettishly. "Divorce is very sad for the children," she says at last. "But sometimes it happens."

Michèle Bennett has good reason to keep quiet about her divorce. The dispute over her settlement has put her and Jean-Claude Duvalier in a delicate position. She wants half of her husband's assets, and if she names a specific figure, it will finally become known just how much he stole. Estimates have ranged as high as $800 million, which, at three times Haiti's annual budget, may be a bit unrealistic. But there is no question that $120 million was his minimum haul—he left a paper trail of checks totaling this sum, drawn on government accounts at commercial banks in Haiti. What no one knows is how much money went out in suitcases.

Sauveur Vaisse, however, refuses to think of his client as a thief. "The accusation has absolutely not been demonstrated," he says. "Not at all.... We have records to show that a lot of the funds they accuse Jean-Claude Duvalier of keeping for himself were in fact used for the public good."

Accommodations at the Duvaliers' first stop in France, the four-star Hôtel de l'Abbaye in Talloires, came to more than $12,000 a day.

Haiti has recovered only a fraction of Baby Doc's wealth, and largely has itself to blame. Each new government over the past six years has sworn to crack down on Duvalier, then limited the effectiveness of the law firms and private investigators in charge of the effort by not providing crucial documents and witnesses—and not paying its bills. Apparently, every administration until Aristide's had its own secrets to conceal. France's cooperation in the case against Duvalier has also been ambiguous, suggesting the lack of a definitive policy on the ex-dictator. At one point, the French government dropped hints that it would consider a motion by Haiti to change Baby Doc's *assignation à résidence* and force him to move to some grubby northern mining town or even French Guiana. But Haiti never made the request.

Instead, Duvalier has merely had to endure some harassment. His worst day was February 11, 1988. At six that morning, by order of the tribunal of Grasse, fifteen French officials descended without warning on his villa in Mougins with a search warrant. They came looking for financial documents, to be turned over to the Haitian government. The Duvaliers were rousted from their beds, and Michèle had no time to dispose of her pink-and-purple suede notebook, in which she kept a record of the presidential couple's expenditures. The notebook confirmed that the Duvaliers paid virtually all their bills in cash, including $10,475 for their phone bill in December 1987. The same month, Michèle spent $455,000 at Boucheron, her favorite Paris jeweler—$13,000 went toward a cigarette lighter. Some of the smaller sums were cash disbursements to "Tonton," her curious nickname for her husband. There was also a clue to Sauveur Vaisse's continued loyalty to the cause of Duvalierism: legal fees totaling $425,000, paid to him in cold cash.

Vaisse's principal legal nemesis in Haiti's case against Duvalier wasn't in it for the money, which was just as well. Haitian-born Jacques Salès is a mergers-and-acquisitions specialist with a French doctorate in law and a postdoc degree from Harvard. The night Duvalier was overthrown, Salès went out to celebrate. "I got kind of drunk," he says, "and I decided that I would participate in the effort to recuperate the money that had been stolen. I thought I owed something to my country."

Friends of Salès's believed there was another, darker reason for his taking the case. Around 1970 his sister Gilberte became one of Baby Doc's favorite mistresses. Eventually they broke off their relationship and she left Haiti. For years afterward they didn't see each other, but she returned in the spring of 1985 with her fiancé, Dr. Raymond Bernadin. About a week before the wedding, she and Bernadin were attacked in their car, apparently by the Tontons Macoute, and burned with sulfuric acid. Gilberte Salès was airlifted to Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami with horrible burns on her face, neck, breasts, and stomach. She lingered for two weeks before dying; Bernadin lived and today practices medicine in Haiti. An article on the incident in *Haïti-Observateur*, an influential newspaper published from New York, asked "whom such a crime would benefit," and suggested an answer: "It has been confirmed that Michèle Bennett had 'good reason to believe' that all was not really over between her husband and Gilberte Salès."

Jacques Salès seems to have no doubt that the order to kill his sister emanated from the National Palace. But he fervently denies that her death is what motivated him to go up against the Du-

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valiers. "When I first learned she had a liaison with Jean-Claude Duvalier, Gilberte became foreign to me—she was no longer my sister," he says, his eyes as hard as enamel. "Dear friends of mine had been killed by Papa Doc, and I could not understand how somebody from my family could have a relationship with the son of a monster. So the fact that my sister was killed by Duvalier thugs did not influence my decision to take the case."

The government of Haiti retained the New York firm of Stroock & Stroock & Lavan, other attorneys in England and Switzerland, and the international private-eye firm Kroll Associates. The legal strategy never varied—Duvalier should be tried in France, not *in absentia* in Haiti, where a verdict against him might be perceived as prejudiced. First, the lawyers for Haiti applied to the tribunal of Grasse, but in June 1987 the judge ruled that the French court was not *compétent* to try a former head of state. Undaunted, the lawyers turned to the court of appeals in Aix-en-Provence, which in April 1988 reversed the decision and agreed to hear the case on its merits. Coming on the heels of the morning police raid that had yielded Michèle's notebook, the ruling looked ominous for Baby Doc. This time Sauveur Vaisse filed an appeal, to the Cour de Cassation—the highest appeals court—in Paris.

Unfortunately, none of the lawyers for Haiti had been paid even their expenses, and only Jacques Salès would continue to work at full speed under those conditions. "The lawyers hated to give up, but they couldn't work for nothing, so it was a very reduced effort," says the head of Kroll Associates' office in France, an asset specialist with the wonderfully improbable name of Bruce Dollar. On May 29, 1990, the Cour de Cassation reversed the Aix-en-Provence decision, ruling that France was indeed not qualified to try Baby Doc for embezzlement. "The decision was really too bad from a number of points of view," Dollar says, "including precedent for other cases. It's very good for dictators in France."

In the end, Haiti enjoyed only some modest victories against Baby Doc. The lawyers were able to freeze certain of his assets: a yacht in Miami; a modest château in disrepair at Théméricourt, near Paris; a $2.5 million condominium in Trump Tower in New York; a $200,000 bank account Michèle had at Irving Trust, also in New York. Apart from these, the only payoff was a lot of accumulated knowledge about Duvalier's financial chicanery, and enough documents to fill seventeen volumes. One finding was especially intriguing: in July 1987 three Frenchmen withdrew $35 million in bearer bonds from the Union Bank of Switzerland on behalf of Baby Doc. An examination of the three men showed them to have long criminal records, for violent crimes and drug trafficking.

But, for the most part, Duvalier didn't need to deal with disreputable people. "One of his primary advisers," says Bruce Dollar, "was a very prominent, very respected Swiss lawyer, who was also a lawyer for Chase Manhattan. His name is Jean Patry. He met personally with Jean-Claude and Michèle. Someone with Baby Doc's kind of wealth can hire the best. You don't have to be smart; all you have to be is rich. You can hire smart."

"I'm not a person who complains," says Michèle, Baby Doc's ex-wife. "Of course, I do miss Haiti. There is nothing better than home."

One smart thing Patry's firm did for Baby Doc was to convert $42 million into Canadian treasury bills, purchased at the Royal Bank of Canada. The transaction was carried out by Patry's law partner Alain Le Fort. Then a British solicitor introduced to Duvalier by Patry, John Stephen Matlin of the London law firm Turner & Co., was put in charge of managing the money. (According to a Matlin memo, he initially had trepidations, but Patry assured him that some of the Duvaliers' wealth was inherited. Despite this, Patry indicated that Matlin was now on his own.) Under Matlin's administration, the $42 million circulated one or more times through Switzerland, even though that country had a standing order to seize any Duvalier account. Perhaps the Swiss didn't know it was Baby Doc's money, because Matlin had been asked to open the accounts in the name of nominee front companies. By the time Kroll Associates pinpointed the $42 million, it was at Barclays Bank in London, where it also could have been seized. But Kroll got there a few days too late; Matlin had already moved it once again, to Luxembourg. Baby Doc still has the money, unless he has spent it.

If the French government is looking for Duvalier's hidden wealth, it isn't looking very hard, as Baby Doc has discovered. His courier, Samir Mourra, makes his mysterious trips for the $100,000 cash infusions; presumably, he does not make a customs declaration on his return. "The French authorities must know about Samir Mourra and the money...yet nothing is done about it. Why?" asks Christian Lionet, a Haiti specialist for the French newspaper *Libération*. It is clear that Duvalier's royal asylum also comes with certain kingly privileges. According to Lionet, Baby Doc has been stopped several times by the police on the autoroute to Paris for driving his BMW at speeds of more than 200 kilometers per hour. "In France, that is a very serious infraction," says Lionet. "If you did that, you could be fined two or three thousand dollars, and your license would be taken away for six months or a year. But the French authorities have closed their eyes to it."

But these are matters that no one in the government seems eager to address. In fact, nothing is likely to disturb Duvalier's tranquillity, unless Aristide should return to power. Aristide has already disclosed his plans to hire France's most controversial lawyer, Jacques Vergès, for a renewed assault on the ex-dictator. Vergès was the attorney for Klaus Barbie, the Nazi "Butcher of Lyons," and was just retained by Marlon Brando to defend his daughter against charges of complicity in the death of her boyfriend. Vergès confirms having met with Aristide before the coup, and says he is impatient to pick up the Duvalier dossier. He will pursue a new tack, seeking to have Baby Doc deported to stand trial in Haiti after all. (Incredibly, given the Barbie case, Vergès says he hopes Baby Doc will be charged with crimes against humanity.) This might prove difficult, since France has no treaty of extradition with Haiti, but, at the very least, it could prove an interesting test of Duvalier's legal status in France.

Until such time, Baby Doc can continue staring at the beach in front of the Carlton hotel, and driving alone in his BMW along the Boulevard of Broken Dictators. □

Fiammetta Rocco, a London-based journalist, provided research assistance for this article.

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CAPTAIN AMERICA STRIKES AGAIN

Critic John W. Aldridge, scourge of America's postwar novelist titans, returns to zap the new generation

BY JAMES WOLCOTT

In a lively gundown of "Literary Gangsters" (reprinted in the collection *Homage to Daniel Shays*), Gore Vidal cast the critic John W. Aldridge adrift in a glacier. Unsuspecting readers may have known Aldridge as the author of *After the Lost Generation*, but to Vidal he was a rat fink *extraordinaire*. Aldridge, he mused, seemed an honest proprietor when he began practicing literary criticism in the late forties, praising Vidal and his contemporaries.

The praise made us think he was not a hood, his shop a legitimate business not a front. Little did we suspect that Mr. Aldridge was a master literary criminal who wanted to contribute not simply a modest footnote to each of our sagas but a terrible full chapter. To achieve this, he even moved to Connecticut in order to be close to certain of his victims. For several years he covered them with unctuous praise in print as well as in private. Meanwhile, he was thoroughly casing the territory. Then he struck. In a blaze of publicity, Mr. Aldridge bit one by one those very asses he had with such cunning kissed, earning himself an editorial in *Life* magazine congratulating him for having shown up the decadence and immorality of the postwar writers. He has long since faded from the literary scene ...as have, fortunately, those scars on which we sit.

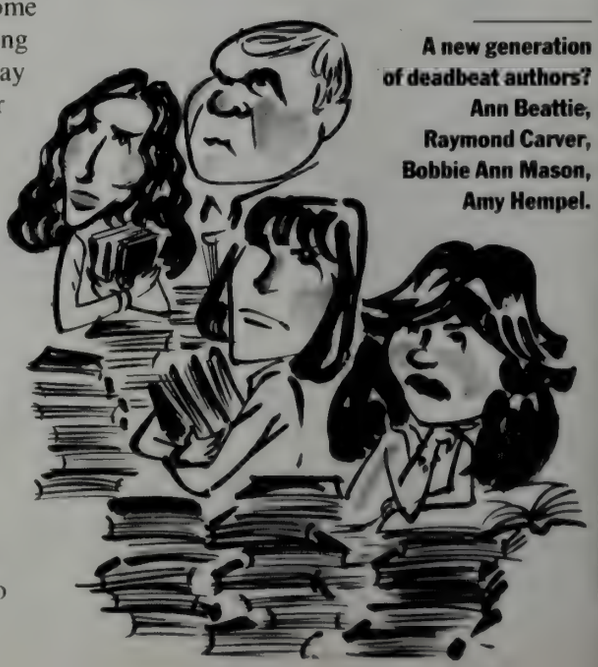
Vidal's purr of satisfaction was premature. After years of dark sleep in his icy abode, Aldridge has once again answered his country's call. Like the comic-book crusader Captain America, this frozen fish stick has been thawed to combat a new generation of deadbeat authors undermining the republic of letters. Here he can't be accused of fraternizing with the enemy. These punks he knows only by inflated reputation. In his new book, *Talents and Technicians* (Scribner's), Aldridge wades into the mix of minimalists, dirty realists, trendy nihilists, and trailer-park regionalists that make up today's literary disarray.

He argues that the tradition of Fitzgerald, Faulkner, Hemingway, and the writers of the postwar era has been trampled beneath the mouse scurry of creative-writing students. Seldom today does a writer hole up on heartbreak ridge, dedicated to the ideal of silence, exile, and cunning. Fiction has become a zombie mating ritual for the young and the zestless. "The novels of Jay McInerney and Bret Easton Ellis, for example, are by any serious critical measure artistically empty works that are best-sellers largely because they depict a spiritually empty world that is attractive to readers who are themselves spiritually empty and so in reading them experience a faint twinge of self-recognition."

Lobotomized by the Muzak of the shopping mall, the more suburban writers also cruise inside a shiny module. "In the KMart fiction of Bobbie Ann Mason and Frederick Barthelme—to take two notable instances—the environment typified by the KMart is not evaluated as the sleazy and soul-deadening thing it is." *Attention, Kmart shoppers, Mayan death masks on sale in Aisle 3...*

And then you have the minimalists, who seem to be Morse-coding "Abandon all hope" with the flicker of an eyelid. With nearly an entire generation of writers in a Ziploc coma, no wonder their novels fail to connect. "Their books have not so far created new circuits in the public imagination or provided the charged symbols for a new vision of the human condition in our time, nor has their language enlarged the vocabulary with which we describe the most urgent problems and preoccupations that concern us." To which one can only say: Well, duh.

It isn't that Aldridge hasn't sniffed something curdled in our literary culture. His aversion to all this hullabaloo



A new generation of deadbeat authors? Ann Beattie, Raymond Carver, Bobbie Ann Mason, Amy Hempel.

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is widely shared. Alfred Kazin—he's kvetched. The novelists Madison Smartt Bell and Mark Helprin have argued the supremacy of protein-rich prose over minimalism's starvation rations. In an *American Scholar* essay entitled "Mistah Perkins—He Dead," Gerald Howard anatomized the fast-buck fix fiction writers find themselves in. (His argument was that, given the haphazard nature of publishing today, in which writers aren't nurtured for the future but are packaged as passing fancies, you can hardly blame them for going for the fast buck. That may be the only foothold they ever get.) Indeed, the significance of *Talents and Technicians*, subtitled "Literary Chic and the New Assembly-Line Fiction," is that it is the first book-length attempt to box this dissatisfaction into a solid overview.

To his credit, Aldridge isn't cowed by reputation. (Vidal, nursing memories of his sore behind, was a bit harsh about Aldridge's personal honor.) He doesn't hesitate to remove some of the saintly haze from the cult of Raymond Carver. He understands that Anne Tyler has been knitting tea cozies for her characters' heads. But if by night Aldridge sports the blue trunks of Captain America, by day he is a professor of English at the University of Michigan. And like many a pipe smoker, he has this unfortunate habit of correcting everyone in sight. His corrections make you feel that he really doesn't understand how fiction functions from the inside. He wants the imagination, in short, to behave.

He contends that Mary Robison's stories might improve if she curbed her flaky characters' freedom "and required them to become subservient to some thematic idea that they should exist to serve." Turn those ragged recruits into good little soldiers! Louise Erdrich also lets her kids run wild. "Erdrich seems to possess abundant raw materials for fiction. But she evidently lacks the ability to take complete imaginative possession of those materials and employ them in the service of a significantly developed dramatic theme." Professors like themes, because they're easy to write on the blackboard. They also enjoy charting influences, because it lets them draw family trees. Stephen Crane begat Hemingway begat Carver begat a pair of faded jeans hanging on the clothesline.

However, writers today—those ingrates—seem to have no respect for their elders. "They appear on the whole to have only moderate intellectual culture. They evidently possess very little critical or satirical perspective on contemporary life, slight knowledge of the past, and apparently no sense that they belong to a literary tradition that might prove nourishing if they were able and willing to learn from it." Maybe; but it's one thing to acknowledge the biggies, another to be oppressed by them. Wrapping up his chapter on T. Coraghessan Boyle, Aldridge laments, "He has not been able, as Scott Fitzgerald once said about Thomas Wolfe, 'to line himself up along a solid gold bar, like Hemingway's courage or Joseph Conrad's art or D. H. Lawrence's intense cohabitations.' " Five famous names in one sentence!—what writer sitting around in his scratchy long johns could compete with that lineup of Solid Gold dancers? (And Boyle is a writer Aldridge *likes*.) Aldridge isn't comfortable with writers' asserting unclassifiable individuality. He wears a helmet while reviewing Amy Hempel. He envisions writers as members of a citizen army toting their themes aloft like placards in some Great March of influence.

It's tempting to see that Great March as trending downhill into a ditch. For Aldridge, as for many critics, American literature has been losing horsepower since the heyday of the twenties. Oh, he allows for exceptions to this general entropy: "I think of Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*, Gaddis's *JR* and *The Recognitions*, Mailer's *Harlot's Ghost*, Heller's *Catch-22* and *Something Happened*, Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five*, and DeLillo's *Players* and *White Noise*." But in the big picture, each generation has failed its parents. The postwar generation fumbled the legacy of Hemingway-Fitzgerald-Faulkner. The crabgrass crew led by John Updike flubbed the lessons of the postwar generation. And now the blank generation has blown the entire franchise, reducing fiction to sound bites and stubble.

Aldridge sees young writers not as ripe but wizened. They have dried figs for testicles, shrunken balloons for ovaries. Most won't last the first frost.

The last chapter of *Talents and Technicians*, is titled "Ripeness Is All," which seems intended as rueful irony. For Aldridge sees young writers not as ripe but wizened. They have dried figs for testicles, shrunken balloons for ovaries. Most of them won't last the first frost. "Even those like Raymond Carver and Ann Beattie, who are perhaps the best known. . . appear destined to join the host of people who will enjoy the experience of being famous for fifteen minutes."

It ought to be depressing, seeing American lit tottering on its last legs, trying to make it to the end of the century. So why isn't it? I think it's because the release of a book like *Talents and Technicians* tells us we've seen the low. To use an economic analogy: the investor Jim Rogers said the recession was over the day President Bush announced that the country was in a recession. His explanation was that Bush sits atop the pyramid of Prevailing Opinion, which makes him the last one to know about hardship down below. Once he knows, everyone knows, and once everyone knows, the bad news has peaked. The situation can only improve.

Similarly, *Talents and Technicians* typifies the lofty malaise of a certain kind of literary mind. Now that it's been put to the page, there are no negatives left in the pipeline. Like presidential leadership, punditry is always one beat behind. Hence the studied gloom of *Talents and Technicians* is grounds for optimism, its funeral oration planting the seeds of resurrection.

Far from seeing the nineties as a feeble wind-down, I predict that the decade will confound Captain America. There's activity afoot with younger Americans such as Larry Brown, Kaye Gibbons, Allegra Goodman, Jennifer Egan, Alice Hoffman, Helen Schulman, Dani Shapiro, Lewis Nordan, Thomas William Simpson, William T. Vollman—none of whom make Aldridge's book. In England, there's Rose Boyt, the *Granta* gang. And there's no reason to rule out the prospect of an impressive pop from old stalwarts. Probably the most impassioned piece of writing in recent years is Saul Bellow's *The Bellarosa Connection*. Who knows what Tom Wolfe is whipping up in his soda shop? Even if none of this pans out, it's still better than playing dead. ☐

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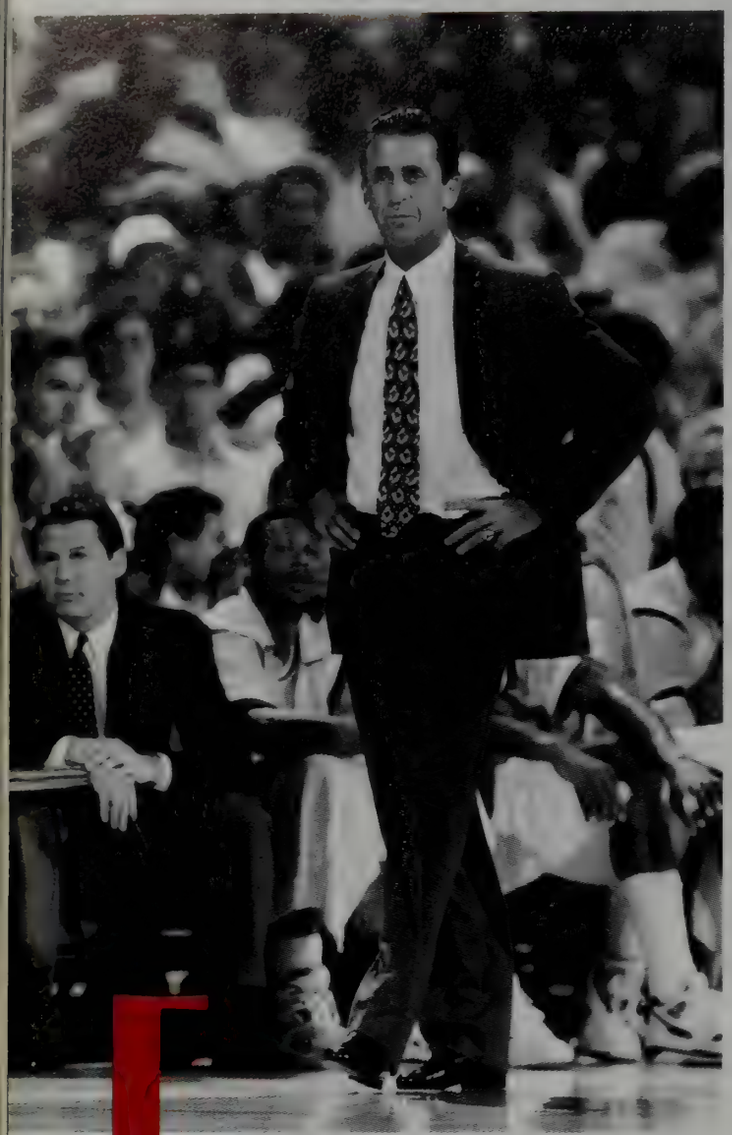

Riley: Women swoon and men want to follow him into battle.

THE LIFE OF RILEY

Pat Riley, former star coach of the L.A. Lakers, is now pushing the resurgent New York Knicks into the upcoming N.B.A. play-offs—but will he push them too far?

BY KEN AULETTA

Few employees of Paramount Communications picture their boss as a pussycat. In fact, Martin Davis likes to style himself one of "the toughest bosses in America," as *Fortune* once dubbed him. Yet around the New York Knicks, one of the many companies under his thumb, the notoriously brusque executive has always felt—he hates admitting it—a bit insecure, even meek. When he wandered down to the team's locker room after a game, Davis confesses, "I used to feel tense." The players didn't know who he was, so they ignored him. He felt like a jerk, so he withdrew, rarely going to games.

Away from Madison Square Garden, sportswriters and columnists heaped scorn on Davis and Paramount for butchering their basketball and hockey teams. Every year the Knicks and New York Rangers deflated their fans, and Davis, who is not knowledgeable about sports, didn't have a clue how to fix it. "I used to blame myself," he admits. He was so gun-shy that he became invisible to major figures in the teams' management. It sounds unbelievable, but he does not remember ever meeting either former Knick coach Rick Pitino or general manager Al Bianchi.

But this season would be different, Davis vowed. So there he was, leaning forward in his courtside seat across from the team bench, enthusiastically pounding his palms together for the Knicks at their November home opener against the Milwaukee Bucks. The Garden was buzzing. There were over 15,000 fans in attendance, more than a few Hollywood notables, and every eyeball was riveted on the new star of the Knicks, who neither rebounds nor scores points: Pat Riley, the slick-haired man languidly pacing the sideline in his double-breasted navy-blue Giorgio Armani suit.

In New York, forty-seven-year-old Pat Riley is treated like a cross between a rock star and a cavalry officer: women swoon and men want to follow him into battle. It is the way he was regarded in Los Angeles, where he coached the Lakers to four world championships in nine years. Riley's Lakers became synonymous with "Showtime," glamorous, high-flying basketball displayed by one of the greatest teams ever to run a fast break. And Riley was the ultimate L.A. coach, tanned and Tenaxed, sporting oxford-cloth shirts he designed himself (tailored in Hong Kong) and driving to work from his home in Brentwood in a mint-condition charcoal-gray Mercedes sedan. During the games, while everyone else in the Forum was screaming and high-fiving, his icy demeanor made him the coolest guy in the place. Jack Nicholson and Michael Douglas sat nearby, craning their necks to watch him; screenwriter Robert Towne modeled the Kurt Russell character in *Tequila Sunrise* on the Laker coach.

But despite his high profile and the star-level adulation he's received in L.A. and New York, Pat Riley feels like a stranger to many of those who watch him work. "People don't know me at all," sighs Riley, who at practices wears sweat suits and the unshaven, hollow-eyed look of a gym rat. "They've always written about 'Showtime' and glitter and glitz and clothes and my hair and gel. It's always been that. They've always missed the substance of what the Lakers were, which was a work-ethic team."

Pat Riley crouches along the sideline in front of the Knick bench as if in silent prayer. His Knicks are on the road, engaged in a pitched 128–126 double-overtime battle against the fierce At-

ANDREW BERNSTEIN

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lanta Hawks. If they stumble, Riley fears, his team may also lose the wobbly self-confidence he has worked so hard to instill. So when Knick guard John Starks launches a long-range bomb, Riley holds his breath. The stadium freezes as the ball rotates toward the basket. When it rips through the net, capping an epic upset, Riley stands, lets out a loud war whoop, and kicks a leg in the air like a Rockette.

In fact, the never contented coach is so enthused that, for the first time this season, he stations himself at the tunnel leading to the locker room so he can congratulate each Knick with, yes, a *smile*: "That was just an *unbelievable* game for us," Riley says after coming out of the locker room, his jade-green Armani tie surprisingly askew. "It was a gut-wrenching game, but it seems like we're developing some resiliency."

Can Pat Riley bring a championship to New York before his players become fatigued by his almost messianic intensity?

Even when he pumps up the volume, Riley understates the case. Through the first half of the 1991–92 season, Riley's Knicks have astonished Martin Davis and Knick fans. By the February All-Star Game, the once dismal team had racked up an impressive 30–16 record, was in first place in its division, and was charging toward the N.B.A. play-offs, which begin in late April. The new coach had succeeded in schooling the Knicks to take fewer dumb, off-balance shots, to work the ball in to their one true star, center Patrick Ewing. He had inspired them to play a ferocious team defense, compensating for a two-cylinder offense. He had carefully rebuilt the shattered confidence of the team's quarterback, point guard Mark Jackson. He had drilled shooting guard Gerald Wilkins to tame his wild playground style, and had coaxed power forward Charles Oakley to stop shot-putting the ball at the basket and settle for the unglamorous rebounds the team needed. Somehow, Riley had persuaded all twelve players to surrender the greedy glory of individual statistics for the innocent satisfaction of winning.

One way to measure how a Pat Riley team is doing is to count the famous faces in the courtside seats. Suddenly, Madison Square Garden is hosting a small constellation of stars, not just such long-suffering Knick fans as Woody Allen, Richard Lewis, and Spike Lee. Kathleen Turner has popped in, as have *Bugsy* director Barry Levinson, Matt Dillon, Rob Lowe, and even Blaine Trump. Pat Riley's wife, Chris, who long ago gave up her own career as a family therapist to accept the role of team wife, has been doing her part to manufacture the buzz by telling friends, including movie publicist Peggy Siegel, that she controls a block of house seats which can be set aside for celebrities. "The movie stars and the directors *all* want to go to games and see what Pat's doing," reports Siegel.

What is Pat doing? He's pounding into his players' heads the same motivational mantras that punctuate the speeches he's delivered to corporate audiences for up to $20,000 a pop. Riley's strictures sound cliché, but his force of personality makes them come alive: Thou shalt think of the team, not thyself. Thou shalt hustle. Thou shalt not whimper. Thou shalt sacrifice all worldly pleasure and glory to get to the promised land.

From the beginning, the implicit leap of faith asked of the players and fans was to believe an inspired coach could remake a team of only modest talent. So far, Riley has delivered.

So far. But now the half-converted are asking the next question: Can Pat Riley bring a championship to New York before his players become fatigued by his almost messianic intensity?

His players both respect and like Riley, but he rarely lets up on the team. He runs grueling three-hour practices that are scripted down to the minute. He evaluates every one of his athletes incessantly, using a whole new category of statistics he has invented that goes beyond box scores to measure every player's effort on every play. He screens hours upon hours of videotapes of the Knicks and their opponents—two or three times. He hunts through Shakespeare and Sun-Tzu for quotes to inspire the troops. He privately scolds players for shoddy performances; when upset, he has even yanked his one superstar, Patrick Ewing, from the game. He's such a perfectionist that when the team arrives at a hotel at 2:30 A.M. the team trainer immediately plugs in a VCR so that the coach can stay up a few hours watching tapes of the next opponent. He worries about his team so much that he often drops ten to fifteen pounds during the pressure of the play-offs; in January, he had to take sleeping pills for insomnia. Even the N.B.A. commissioner thinks Riley goes overboard: he fined the Knicks $10,000 when their coach ran his players through an illegal extra practice on New Year's Day.

Not surprisingly, Riley's monomania is not applauded by everyone around the Garden. Already there is scattered grumbling, though not from the players or Knick management, who are certain he's the best coach in basketball. "Everyone respects Riley, but very few like him," says one Garden executive not connected with the team. "Pat is his own company. He demands that no one may walk in the arena when the team is there, that no one may travel on the team plane or bus. . . . I have to reintroduce myself to him every time I meet him. He behaves like a superstar."

Riley admits his white-hot intensity can burn out those around him. In fact, it was the reason he left the Lakers. After nine seasons, what he calls "toxic envy" had set in. Personalities rubbed one another raw, once fresh motivational lectures were met with rolling eyes, success eroded the willingness to sacrifice and resurrected dormant selfishness and jealousies. It's inevitable, he says with equanimity. "It will happen here."

So, before "toxic envy" hits New York, can Riley win a championship with these Knicks?

According to Riley and the Knick brain trust, the brutally honest answer is no. The premier teams—the Chicago Bulls, the Portland Trail Blazers, the San Antonio Spurs, the Golden State Warriors, the Utah Jazz, the Cleveland Cavaliers, the Phoenix Suns, and the Lakers, until they were deflated by Magic Johnson's sudden retirement after testing positive for the AIDS virus—have what Riley calls "a talent cushion." Each has two to three players who rank among the top eight players in the league at their position. The Knicks have only one—Patrick Ewing. Publicly, Riley has nurtured the confidence of his young men, raining praise on Mark Jackson and Gerald Wilkins and Charles Oakley. Privately, he knows the Knicks have too many glaring deficiencies. "We don't have the talent cushion here yet," observed Riley early in the season. "Nor am I sure we have the attitude here yet."

The team's *(Continued on page 114)*

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FRATELLI ROSSETTI

A CERTAIN WORLD WALKS IN ROSSETTI.

(Continued from page 108) brain trust hasn't been deluded by early successes. On January 7, when he heard that thousands of Knick fans were lined up at the Garden, fans who would purchase $500,000 in tickets to future games, New York Knick president Dave Checketts brought hot coffee and muffins down to them. As the six-foot-five-inch executive strolled through the crowd, he heard fans exclaim, "You're going to win a championship!"

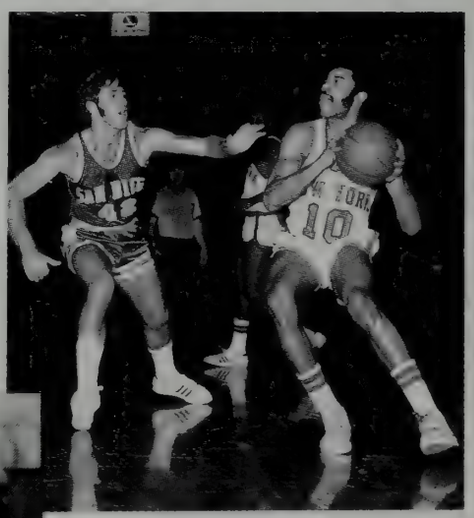
No way, thinks Checketts: "The team is somewhere between people on one extreme who say, 'The Knicks are just a mirage,' and the other extreme, which are these people who bought more individual-game tickets than ever in the history of the Garden." The truth, says Checketts, is this: "I know we're at least two players away. We need a backcourt player who can shoot, an all-star-caliber player for the number-two spot [shooting guard]. And we need a very athletic frontcourt player who plays big forward and who can play backup center."

In other words: Good-bye, Gerald Wilkins, a sometimes spectacular athlete who team officials believe too often lapses into undisciplined playground-style basketball. Good-bye, Charles Oakley, who can outmuscle enemy rebounders but rarely scores and has a reputation for sulking.

And, though it will come as a shock to him and to many fans, good-bye, Mark Jackson. Despite the point guard's vast improvement under Riley, there is a consensus among club officials that Jackson will never lead the Knicks to a championship. "We need a point guard to score," explains an important team insider. "We need him to defend and to make huge plays at the end." No matter his strenuous efforts over the summer to reduce his body fat by working daily with the team's conditioning coach, no matter his newfound maturity, his dazzling passes, or Riley's praise. Deep down there is a rock-hard conviction among Knick strategists that Jackson is cursed. He cannot lead this team because, whether it is his fault or the other players', the other Knicks don't trust Jackson enough to follow him. A high Knick official says pointedly, "A change of scenery would be fantastic for Mark."

All of this raises the question: Is Pat Riley lying to his players?

In one sense, he is. True, he tells Jackson that he needs to work harder on defense, and tells Wilkins he has to stop hotdogging, and tells Oakley to forget about shooting the ball. And he doesn't blow smoke in their ears, the way former Knick coach Rick Pitino used to, telling players they were the best in the league. But he's also not telling them the whole truth: that he doesn't believe they can take the Knicks past the first round or two of the play-offs.



A son playing catch with his father: Pat Riley guards Walt Frazier, 1970 (*right*); Lee Riley, manager in the Nebraska State League, in the late thirties (*below*).

Riley is not an uncomplicated man. He understands that a leader operates on several different levels simultaneously—and that followers operate on a need-to-know basis. Which is one of the many reasons the Knicks reached out to Pat Riley in the first place.

Last season, the Knicks lost more games (forty-three) than they won (thirty-nine), and by midyear Martin Davis was deeply embarrassed. They had suffered eleven losing seasons in the previous seventeen. "The team," summed up veteran Kiki Vandeweghe, "was in the habit of losing." Nancy Grunfeld, the wife of vice president of personnel Ernie Grunfeld, was blunter: "Coming to this place last year was like a shivah call."

"Madison Square Garden was not a priority, as was Paramount Pictures and Simon & Schuster," Davis explains from his meticulous, glass-walled forty-second-floor office in the Paramount building overlooking Central Park. "People blamed Paramount, but it wasn't true. Now they can blame the forty-second floor."

By early 1991, Davis was already talking to producer Stanley Jaffe (*The Accused, Fatal Attraction,* and *Kramer vs. Kramer*) about coming aboard as his heir apparent. The first task for the New York–bred Jaffe, a lifelong Knick and Ranger fan, would be to fix the mess at the Garden. In the meantime, Davis and Dick Evans, then president of the MSG Corporation (which oversees the Knicks), approached their choice for the new president of the Knicks: Dave Checketts, who had built the Utah Jazz into a powerhouse in the mid-1980s.

Checketts, then vice president of development for the N.B.A., missed the action of piloting a franchise. He had turned down the Knick presidency in 1987, but this time the Knicks were promising him real power. It was tantalizing. But first Checketts undertook a clandestine mission. He would not accept the job, he reveals now, "unless I knew I could get Pat Riley as coach. There is no other coach in the same class."

Checketts called Riley, who was then working side by side with Bob Costas as a $500,000-a-year basketball analyst on NBC. They already knew each other, and a lunch was not unusual. They met at the Regency Hotel on Park Avenue, where Riley stayed when he came to New York. It didn't take long to realize they were kindred spirits. For Checketts, like Riley, also reveres intangible qualities. "If you have two players that are equal," Checketts says, "you should always take the player who has more character. If I had to choose, I'd take a player with 20 percent less talent if he has more character."

When the two men finally swung around to the subject of Riley's new career as a TV analyst, it seemed clear to Checketts that Riley was unfulfilled. Broadcasting seemed a dead end. Riley was even thinking of getting into the movie business, and had taken acting lessons (when he was coach of the Lakers, he had turned down the offer of a film role from friend Robert Towne). "He wasn't about to be a 'character' on television like John Madden, nor a clown," explains longtime friend Michael Fuchs, chairman and C.E.O. of HBO. "Nor was he going to be glib and spontaneous like Bob Costas." In fact, Riley didn't particularly like the direction the network was trying to steer him.

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"He used to complain a little bit about the things NBC expected of him," says childhood pal Ben Jacobson. "They wanted him to be 'controversial,' and to criticize other coaches or players. That's not something he wanted to do."

When the moment was right, Checketts broached his secret: "Pat, if I ever decide to run a team again, and I think I'm going to be given an opportunity, would you consider getting back in?"

"If it's the team I think you're talking about," Riley answered, "absolutely."

"I never doubted that he would take the job," Checketts says now. "This guy still has fire—like I do. And he hated what he was doing—as I did."

Checketts' appointment as Knick president was announced on March 1, 1991. That same day, he telephoned Riley to say, "I haven't forgotten our conversation." Riley had not either, he assured Checketts, but out of respect for Knick coach John MacLeod, Riley said they should not speak again until MacLeod's fate was resolved.

A solid, experienced coach, John MacLeod was also a gentleman. But, as Knick vice president John Cirillo says (speaking generically), "it's not enough to be a good coach—the players have to believe in you." So Checketts told MacLeod that, until he evaluated things, he was unprepared to give the coach the contract he wanted. Several days later, when the athletic director of Notre Dame called MacLeod to offer him a five-year contract, MacLeod went to Checketts to explain that he didn't know that he could turn it down. Checketts said he understood. The new Knick president, who was determined to treat MacLeod with the dignity the Knick front office often denied its employees, never told MacLeod that Checketts was the one who first slyly planted the idea with the Notre Dame A.D.

Next came the chase to get Pat Riley. They met secretly on May 11 and, to avoid the press, continued their furtive negotiations over the next several weeks in various hotel suites. They discussed Knick weaknesses, the crowded point-guard position, the desperate need for outside shooting. They talked about Patrick Ewing, who was trying to exercise a clause in his ten-year, $30 million contract allowing him to become a free agent if four or more N.B.A. players raked in as much as or more than he did. The Knicks were insisting that only three other players topped Ewing's salary, and an official arbitrator was pondering the case. Riley, who the year before had called Ewing the best center in basketball, wanted assurances from Checketts that the team's sole star could not exit.

The two men also talked contract terms. Granting Riley a say over trades and draft picks was easy, though Riley suggests he was given veto authority and Checketts says that as president he retains the ultimate power. Because the two men had such a friendly rapport, this did not become a point of contention. What did were the financial terms. Initially, Riley approached the table like a movie star: associates say he asked for $2 million a year in salary plus incentive clauses, *plus* a book contract with Paramount's Simon & Schuster, *plus* a mortgage-free house, *plus* a deal with Paramount Pictures to produce and perhaps even write and direct movies. "He started off unrealistic about what they would pay him," admits Riley's friend Ben Jacobson. Which is one reason Checketts began interviewing three other candidates.

Riley asked for $2 million a year, *plus* a book contract, *plus* a house, *plus* a movie deal with Paramount Pictures.

In the end, according to an official who knows, Riley settled for a five-year contract worth a total of just over $6 million in salary, plus "typical" incentive clauses for each round of the playoffs the Knicks win—no book contract, no movie deal, no house. Checketts did agree that when the team was in New York it would stay at the Regency Hotel, where Riley received a free suite in return for promoting the hotel. And Riley was also handed a few Garden-related endorsement deals, though none presumably as attractive as the long-term deal he has had with old friend Giorgio Armani that provides him with a free wardrobe and has presented Chris Riley with more than a few outfits of her own.

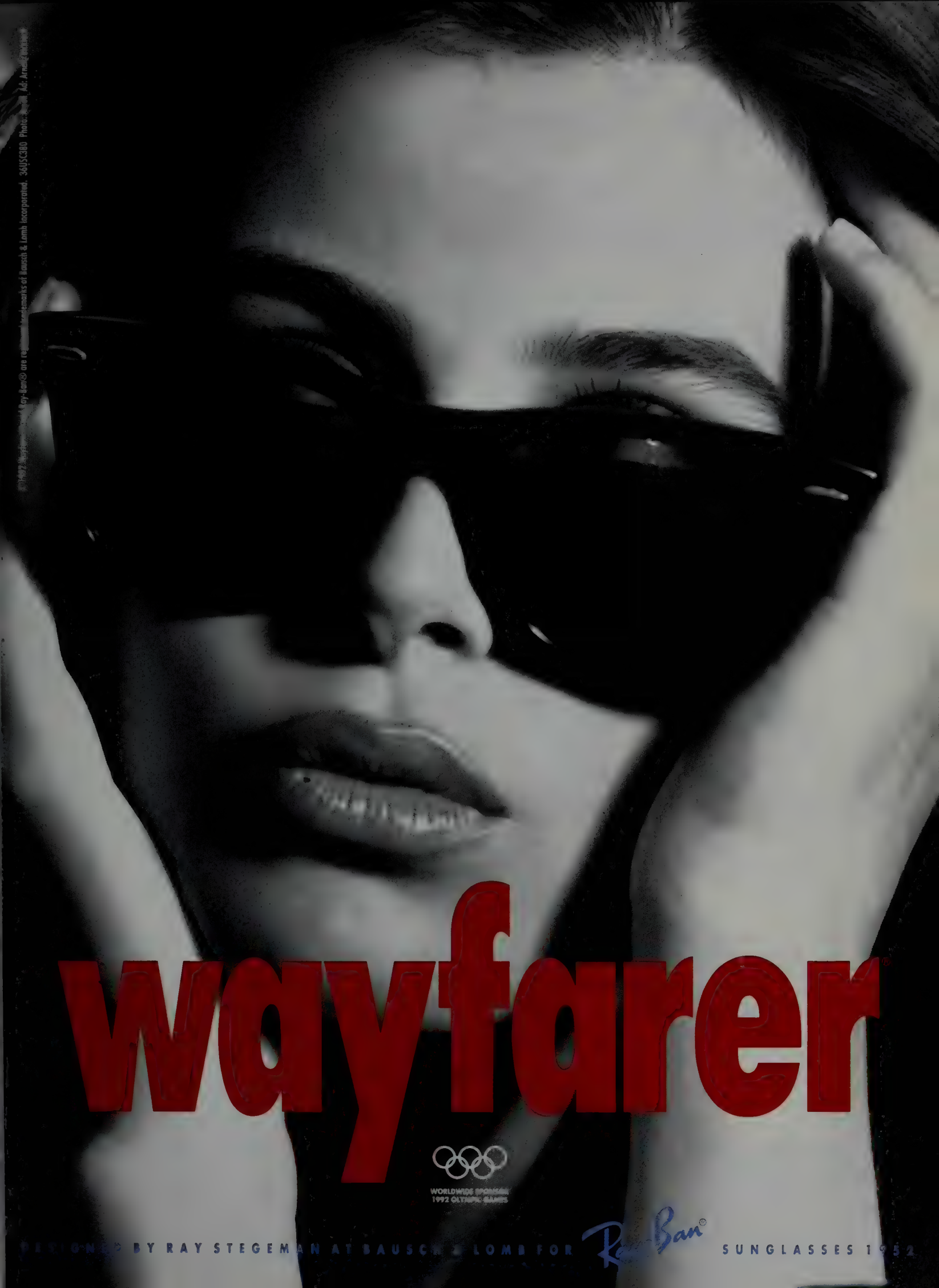
Pat Riley's initial task, as he saw it, was to wiggle his way into his players' heads. His first meeting was with the troubled point guard, Mark Jackson. The onetime Rookie of the Year, now entering his fifth year in the N.B.A., would be Riley's chief reclamation project. After his surprising first season, Jackson's swollen confidence had plunged him into a nosedive which he had not been able to pull out of. His most recent year was his worst: he had been booed and benched regularly. Knick officials had muttered to the New York newspapers that Jackson didn't jump well and was slow-footed, that he showboated with "theatrical" passes, that he didn't think of the team first.

The Knicks announced that there would be a wide-open, three-way competition among Jackson, twenty-six, Maurice Cheeks, thirty-four, and first-round draft choice Greg Anthony. But Riley now reveals that he presented a different picture to Jackson in June when the door to the coach's cramped Garden office was closed.

"I have listened to everybody around here," Riley told Jackson solemnly. "There isn't anyone who doesn't think you should be traded." He let that sink in before he continued. "But you're my starter. If you don't start, there will be nothing but controversy. So this year you will either start or you will be out of here."

It was a statement that would have stunned most of the other players and nearly all the Knick fans if they'd known about it. But, as Riley explains it now, it was a chess move born of pure reason. He had studied for this face-to-face as carefully as he prepares for every opposing team. The statistical breakdown from the previous year revealed that, despite his shortcomings, Jackson was the top-rated point guard off the bench in the N.B.A. Logic told Riley that he could not build a team around a thirty-four-year-old athlete like Maurice Cheeks or a rookie like Greg Anthony. Riley actually had no choice but to award the ball to Jackson. He didn't say this to the sensitive point guard, of course. All he said was *You're my guy*. The young athlete's withered confidence began to revive.

Riley custom-tailored his remarks to fit each Knick. He told Patrick Ewing that he was a "proud warrior" who could lead the team. Ewing worked as hard as any athlete he knew, Riley said, but he was not a leader in the locker room, the way such stars as Magic Johnson or the Chicago Bulls' Michael Jordan were. Instead, the quiet seven-footer led by example—which on a young team was not enough. Now his whole focus, Riley told him, had to be on what it takes to win. "Most players come into this league with a Me mentality," says Riley. "You've got to let them go through it. One day they realize that they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are miserable even with all the dollars and the fame because they are not a winner. They have no inner peace. That's the next level for him."

Some players Riley wanted to liberate, like Ewing and Jackson. Others he wanted to handcuff. With six-foot-nine-inch forward Charles Oakley, a powerful rebounder but a poor shooter, Riley's task was to get him "in the right spirit" to accept a reduced offensive role. The core of what Riley told Oakley, and all the others, was selflessness.

At the October training camp, Riley announced that he would be monitoring their team play with his "effort statistics." Video coordinator Bob Salmi and a staff of four would chart each scrimmage and game and deliver to Riley and his three assistant coaches a videotape and a computerized plus/minus report comparing each player's hustle with his opponent's. As a result the coach would be able to count not just how many points or rebounds they notched but how many times they dove headfirst for a loose ball, passed off to the open man, boxed out an opponent, covered for a teammate on defense, or jumped for a rebound even if they didn't get it. Sixty-one-year-old assistant coach Dick Harter says that, under Riley, "there are more statistics kept on this team than on any other."

What the new coach was determined to do was to quantify the unquantifiable: attitude, teamwork, sweat. Although his Laker teams were known for their flash and dazzle, their thundering fast breaks and precision passing, their foundation was always fearsome team defense and ruthless rebounding. "You can't run if you don't rebound the ball," says Riley, laying down another immutable law. "In this league, no one runs for forty-eight minutes. You want to develop a period of three or four 'skirmishes' that can result in three or four 12–2 or 8–0 'runs' that are born out of defensive pressure, initiative, and big plays that will lead to fast breaks. If you can win three out of four of those major skirmishes during a game, you will win most of those games."

To win more skirmishes Checketts and Grunfeld snatched small forward Xavier McDaniel in a trade with the Phoenix Suns. "The Knicks finally got a tough guy, a leader," declared Jim Karvellas, the astute Knick radio play-by-play man. Even before the season started, McDaniel was heralded as a savior. (Of course, three years before, Charles Oakley had been hailed in similar fashion.)

Over the next two months, the Knicks hacked their way through eleven straight victories at home, roaring into the new year with a startling 18–8 record and the top spot in the Atlantic Division. From opening day, the team gathered around its new coach as if he were Father Riley leading them in prayer. In huddles, all twelve players, not just the five starters, keep their eyes fixed on the coach. Mark Jackson gushed to *The New York Times*, "It's great to have somebody who believes in you." The normally shy Patrick Ewing was shouting encouragement on the court, slapping palms and bumping chests to congratulate teammates, smiling more. (He had more reason to smile: in November the Knicks agreed to add two more years to the four years remaining on his ten-year, $30 million contract; they will pay their franchise player $33 million for the next six years, a jackpot of $48.8 million over Ewing's twelve years with the Knicks.)

There was another change in Ewing: he calls Riley "coach." The star center had addressed every one of his four previous coaches by his first name. "Patrick has only bestowed the title of coach on two people," observes Checketts. "One was John Thompson, at Georgetown. The other is Pat Riley."

"Coach never changes his tone of voice," says 250-pound backup forward Anthony Mason, who along with fellow free agent John Starks has been a prime example of overachievement through relentless effort. "He never singles out anybody for criticism. He makes a player want to play for the coach."

Asked what was different about the Knicks under Riley, Boston Celtic legend Red Auerbach gruffly waves an unlit cigar and growls, "They found out they can win. He has them thinking positive. They're scrappy. They go after every loose ball. They're playing better defense. They are utilizing Ewing's greatness."

Inevitably, though, Riley's Knicks seemed to fall back to earth. From the day after Christmas through January 27, the Knicks were 9–8. They did rack up five straight at the end of the month, including three out of four road games against such stronger teams as the Golden State Warriors and Checketts' alma mater, the Utah Jazz. But through early February the Knicks still had a losing record against teams with winning records.

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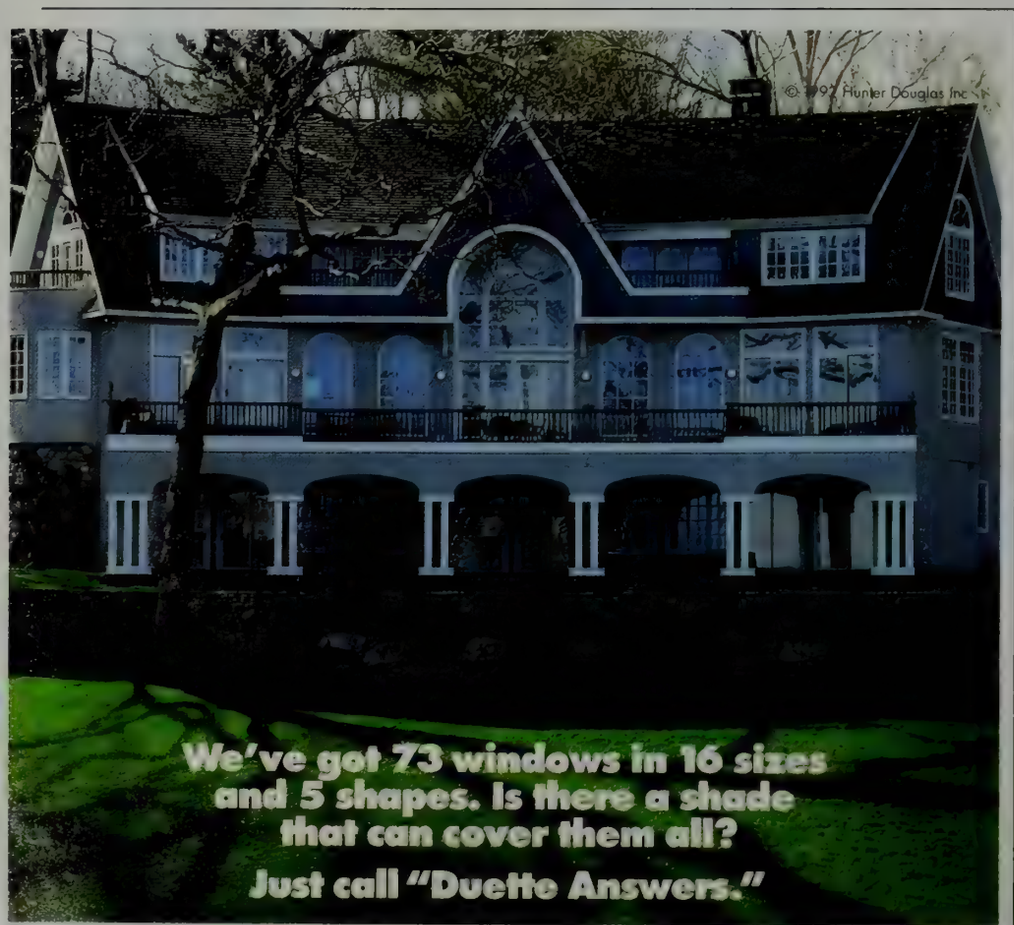

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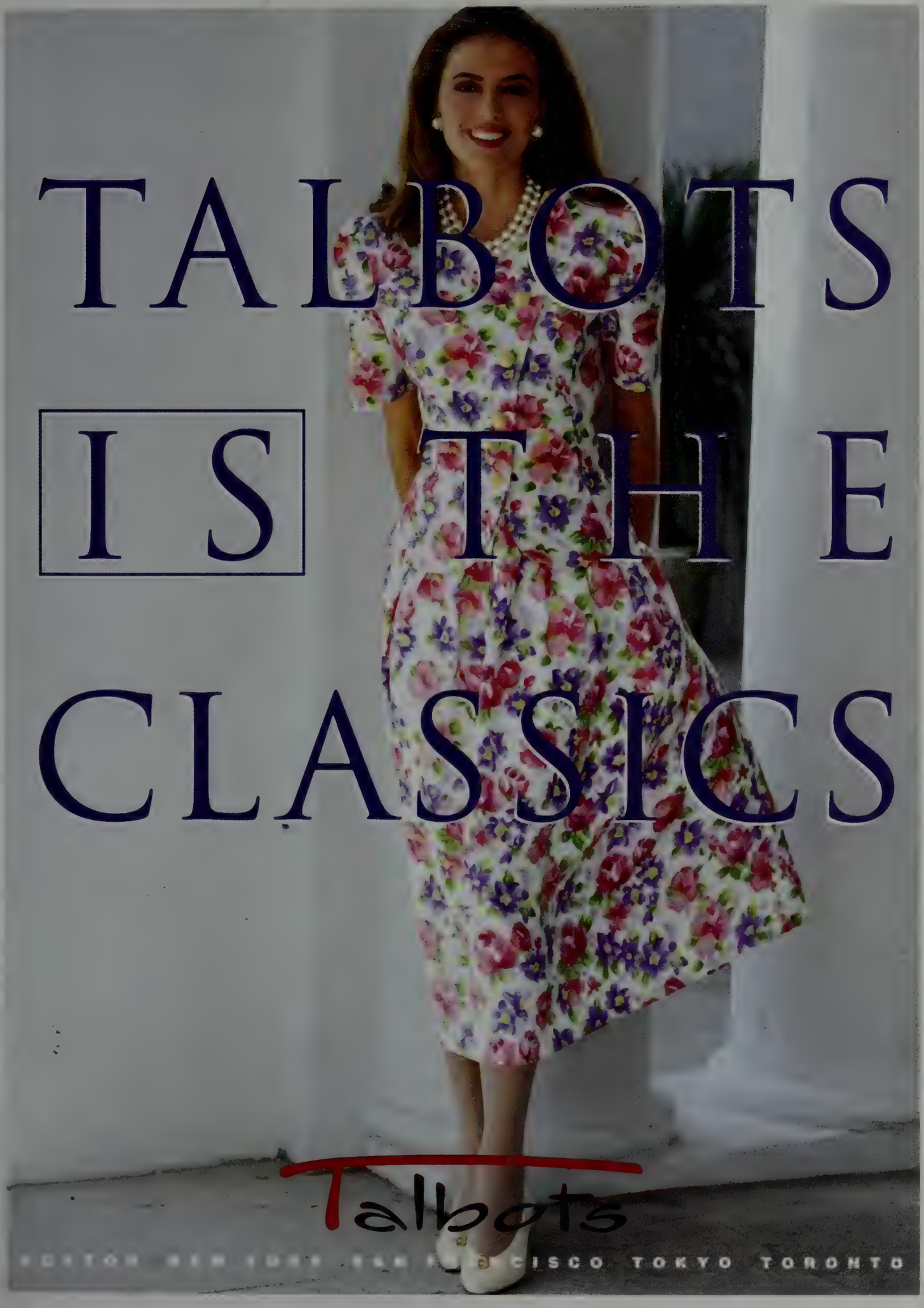

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There has always been a chasm between the rock-star perception of the winningest coach in pro-basketball history and the reality. A few days after Christmas, Dave Checketts was surprised to learn that Riley was not spending a glamorous New Year's Eve with some of his presumed Hollywood pals. So Deb and Dave Checketts and Chris and Pat Riley met for a quiet dinner at Terra, a modest Italian restaurant in Greenwich, Connecticut, where the Checkettses, who are Mormons, clinked their glasses of cranberry juice with the Rileys' glasses of champagne.

Over pasta and broiled salmon, Checketts, who is thirty-six but could pass for a recently graduated college-fraternity president, mentioned that he had lost his father in 1988. Suddenly, a vein seemed to open in Riley, and out spilled memories of his youth in Schenectady, New York, and of his father. Lee Riley had always been, Riley said, a relative stranger. The six Riley children could describe their father's natty dress, or the neat way he slicked his hair straight back, but mostly they remembered him being away a lot.

Lee Riley's business was baseball, as an outfielder, pitcher, and first-baseman in the Philadelphia Philly farm system, then for eight years as a manager of various Philadelphia minor-league teams, including the Schenectady Blue Jays. In 1952, after he was repeatedly passed over to manage the major-league Phillies, Lee Riley left the game. "When my father was released he threw out everything," Pat Riley remembers. "I had nothing of his." Tossed in the garbage were the uniforms, baseballs, photographs—everything a son could hang on to. To purge his disappointment, Lee Riley turned to alcohol.

The family finances slid as Riley's father opened a food-and-newspaper variety store. When that didn't pan out, he became a janitor at Bishop Gibbons High School. For the final few happy years of his life, he doubled as the school's baseball coach.

Throughout, Pat Riley remembers his father as a very strong figure, even fearsome. If his baseball team lost, everyone mourned. To toughen his son, Lee Riley ordered Pat's older brothers to take him to the basketball playground and match up against older gang members, who did not hesitate to smash an elbow in his face. Pat Riley learned to compete the hard way.

The son also learned about self-control. As a boy, Pat Riley had a ferocious temper—once, when he got beaten in a card game and lost one dollar, he punched a fist through the ceiling of Ben Jacobson's Schenectady basement. Today the volatile Riley temper, like the man, is under strict control. "He never shows misery or elation," says Jacobson, who now runs his own Manhattan investment firm and remains close to Riley. "He has his emotions in check." Well in check: Riley has never spoken of his father to his lifelong friend.

Spurred by Lee Riley and a succession of iron-willed coaches, six-foot-four-inch Pat Riley drove himself to become an overachieving all-American at the University of Kentucky, and a first-round draft pick of the San Diego Rockets in 1967. He was twenty-five—and had just struggled through the third season of his scrappy nine-year pro-basketball career—when Lee Riley died suddenly of a heart attack.

Checketts says the New Year's Eve dinner was an eye-opener, giving him fresh insight into Riley. "It's a *Field of Dreams* story," says Checketts, whose own father's slow death from emphysema at least gave him time to spend with him at the end. "All of us want to have a resolution of the father-son thing," says Checketts. "Pat didn't get a chance to say good-bye, or even hello."

Pat Riley says he first heard his dead father's voice in 1985, the year after his Los Angeles Lakers were trounced by the Boston Celtics in the finals. It was the eighth time in eight championship finals that the Lakers had lost to the Celtics. The Lakers had "choked," Boston great Larry Bird said acidly afterward. Pat Riley agreed. In fact, the coach felt he was responsible. He accused himself of betraying too much emotion, of losing control by permitting the Lakers to match the more physical Boston team elbow for elbow instead of playing their own, balletic style. So Riley dedicated the next season to "gaining back our self-respect," and searching for ways to become a better coach.

One year later both teams were in the finals again—but the opening game continued the same horrifying pattern: Celtics 148, Lakers 114. Riley was desperate to jolt his players out of their daze. "I went to my wife, I went to books, to find a message" to inspire the team, he says. He wrote something up, but wasn't satisfied. Game Two loomed three days away.

Then Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, the Lak-

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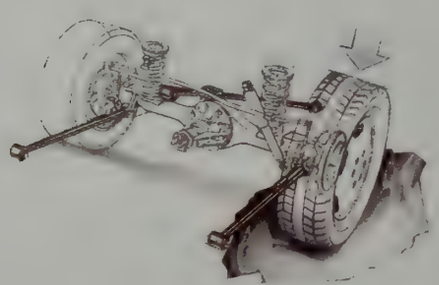

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ers' all-star center, asked if his father, who was visiting from New York, could ride with them to Boston Garden aboard the team bus. Riley consented. On the bus, Riley couldn't take his eyes off the pair, noticing the respect the son accorded the father, the easy way they talked. Riley remembered the last time he had seen his own father, at his 1970 wedding to Chris in San Diego. As Lee Riley left the reception at the Town & Country Hotel, he leaned out the window of his car and told his son, who was worried about his stalled pro-basketball career, "Just remember what I always taught you. Every now and then there comes a time and place where a man has to plant his feet, stand firm, and make a point about who he is and what he believes in—and kick some ass."

When the Lakers arrived at Boston Garden, Riley gathered them in the locker room and did something unusual: he made his pre-game talk deeply personal. For the first time, he talked about fathers and sons, about how his father had fought back from failure and how he learned from his dad never to flinch, to stand with his back to the wall and *kick some ass*. The Lakers, electrified by their coach's heartfelt speech, made their stand: they won Game Two and, eventually, the championship.

"There isn't anyone who doesn't think you should be traded," Riley told Mark Jackson. "But you're my starter."

What began to crystallize in Pat Riley's mind was the importance not just of talent but of what moves talent, of what might be labeled the Human Factor—motivation, attitude, intensity, and what he calls "a spirit of tolerance" that lubricates team chemistry, qualities Riley lumps together vaguely, almost mystically, as *it*. "I have seen talented players come into the N.B.A. with extraordinary skills," says Riley, "and I have seen less talented players forge ahead of those guys because they had an extraordinary attitude. You cannot have a team of twelve superstars."

The problem, Riley knows, is that in the N.B.A. all you start out with is superstars. Nearly every one of the league's 324 pros has been drenched in adulation from the time he was a teenager, most of them high-school sensations and many college all-Americans. They were rewarded with multimillion-dollar contracts and bonus clauses. They are idolized by an entire nation on television in games and in ads, chased by flocks of reporters and photographers, and, in every city, by beautiful, young, available women. "Imagine if you had to coach a team of Michael Jackson, Bruce Springsteen, Dion, Paul Simon, and Billy Joel," says N.B.A. commissioner David Stern. "That's what it's like coaching in the N.B.A."

What Riley came to understand is that a coach has to develop a team's attitude, not just its muscles. For Riley, the true spirit of teamwork was embodied by Magic Johnson, who joined the Lakers in 1979. After Johnson played each position on the court—guard, forward, and center—in the 1980 championship game, headlines proclaimed: IT WAS MAGIC.

"It wasn't magic," says Riley. "It was Earvin Johnson." When Johnson was nine, Riley says, he had a coach who said he was so good that every time he touched the ball he should not pass it off to a teammate but should instead shoot. The team won, but the locker room after the game was morose. His teammates, who rarely scored, were sullen. Their parents were joyless. "So at nine years old," says Riley, "he learned one of the most important things in life. He had made a commitment that he wanted to be a basketball player. But he learned that when players feel good about themselves the team will be successful. It's very simple, but it's one of the most difficult things to teach."

By the mid-eighties, Riley replaced his longish hair and thick sideburns with the slicked, straight-back hairstyle favored by his father. Riley became, remembers Abdul-Jabbar, "more self-confident." To the Laker "family," Magic Johnson would say, Riley became "the patriarch"—Father Riley.

But Riley did not mellow; he became more and more driven. Practices swelled to three or more hours. He climbed inside the heads of his players, stoked their resentments against other teams, sometimes inciting them with anger, sometimes with pride. When they were knocked out of the play-offs in 1986, he challenged them to make the following season the Year of the Career-Best Effort.

With Magic Johnson, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, and James Worthy leading the way, the Lakers were the dominant team of the eighties. In 1987, while they were still in the locker room celebrating their third championship of the Riley era, the coach stunned them by predicting they would repeat the following season—a feat that had not been accomplished in nearly two decades. Incredibly, the team rose to his bait, capturing the crown again the following year.

Dazzled by the Lakers' grace and glitz, what many fans and some sportswriters overlooked were the bleary-eyed hours the coach and his players put in, the obsessive fear of losing that drove the team as it had driven Riley from boyhood. "I've always been somebody," admits Riley, "who worried that someone would take away everything I have."

Eventually, with success and time, the Laker family ties began to fray. Riley used to refer to himself as "a tolerant tyrant," but some players thought the balance had shifted to the latter. To them, the Hollywood friends, the slicked hair and sleek jackets, and the exhausting repetition of practices and pep talks became tiresome. "The image worked against him after a while," recalls Jabbar. "We knew him earlier. He got into his style a little bit. He became a little more comfortable with his authority and began wielding it with a little less sensitivity."

Jabbar remembers the time that the L.A. Forum was being sued by a fan who had had an accident inside. Though Jabbar, Magic, and Worthy had not witnessed it, they had to drive together to Orange County to testify. They would have to miss practice, they told the coach. No way, replied Riley, who scheduled a team practice for seven A.M. "He became more rigid about stuff like that," remembers the Lakers' future Hall of Fame center. Particularly in the last two seasons, players complained that he would try to motivate by provoking them to anger. "It was like getting pissed off at your dad," says Jabbar. "You sulk. But unlike a dad, you can cut your link."

During the 1989–90 season, the first year Riley coached without the retired Jabbar, he pushed the team harder than ever. Michael Cooper, who was nearing the end of his distinguished career as a defensive specialist and long-range shooter, was upset at Riley's psychological tricks and his own reduced playing

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[illegible] Cooper requested a meeting with general manager Jerry West, who mentioned this to Riley. No problem with a meeting if it's to talk over Cooper's contract or his future with the team, Riley responded coolly. Any discussions about Cooper's playing time, however, should be with the coach, not the general manager.

The sit-down between the player and the general manager turned into a gripe session about the coach. West called Riley to report that he had met with Cooper, listened to his laments, and agreed with some. "You got a problem," West told Riley, according to Riley intimates.

"No," retorted Riley, "Cooper has a problem." West asked for an air-clearing meeting between the players, the coach, and West. Riley, furious, refused. "You've put the coach's whole credibility in question," Riley exploded, according to friends who discussed the incident with Riley.

The confrontation sealed Riley's decision to leave the Lakers, but in truth he had other reasons to want out. He felt the players had lost their fire. "A seven A.M. practice before we won the championships would have been understood," he now says. "But not after four championships. . . . *They* changed. I never changed."

Another frustration was mounting within Riley. Because he had such great players, Hall of Fame–bound athletes who made the game seem effortless, he never felt he received the credit he deserved for inducing stars to sublimate their towering egos and play great defense, or for deftly transferring team leadership from Jabbar to Johnson. It was a running joke among sportswriters that Riley, who had the best winning percentage of any N.B.A. coach in history, did not win the Coach of the Year award until 1989–90—a year his team was eliminated from the play-offs.

The way Knick management figures it, they have a window of three years to [illegible] it all. Why? Because the team is built around its one superstar, Patrick Ewing, and they estimate he has perhaps three good years left.

And even if the Knicks go farther than expected in the upcoming play-offs, they are three players away from a championship team, or so they think. The championship teams of 1970 and 1973 had five scorers, five athletes who could win a tight game in the closing seconds. The current Knicks are carrying three starters—Jackson, Wilkins, and Oakley—who through midseason were totaling a mere twenty-nine points per game. They had hoped to get one key addition in a swap before the February 20 trading deadline; they were able only to make the minor acquisition of backup center James Donaldson from the Dallas Mavericks.

"It's a *Field of Dreams* story," says Checketts about Riley and his father. "Pat didn't get a chance to say good-bye, or even hello."

There is another transformation Riley would like to pull off. "We need to change the nucleus and personality of this team," says an important member of the Knick family. The core Knick veterans—Jackson, Wilkins, Oakley, and Ewing—says someone who sits beside them on the bench and watches them closely, are not good friends. They don't pal around together. They simply don't seem to care about one another. They are not family, which is what Riley expects.

The Knick brain trust also worries about the New Yorkers who surround them at every game. The ticket holders in the Garden, along with the ones in Boston, are "the most sophisticated in the league," argues Marv Albert, the respected television voice of the Knicks. But the Celtics, unlike the Knicks, have rewarded their fans with a winning tradition, with players and teams that inspire awe. Bostonians come to their dingy Garden to root. New Yorkers, after twenty years of inflated prices and crushed hopes, are accustomed to screaming at their Knicks, not for them. They are knowledgeable and unforgiving, all too ready to call anyone who drops a pass or blows a lay-up *a bum!* "In other cities, the fans are all over the visiting team," says Knick V.P. John Cirillo. "In New York, they're all over you."

Last year, it dragged Patrick Ewing down, which is why Checketts believes that the star center's contract hassle may have been about more than money or pride. "Patrick didn't know if he wanted to face it anymore," Checketts thinks. Checketts concedes that Knick fans had reason to be angry with the team and past management, but the Utah-born executive feels fans in New York, unlike any city he can name, swing wildly between contempt and adulation. "One of our biggest issues is that many of our players don't want to play at home."

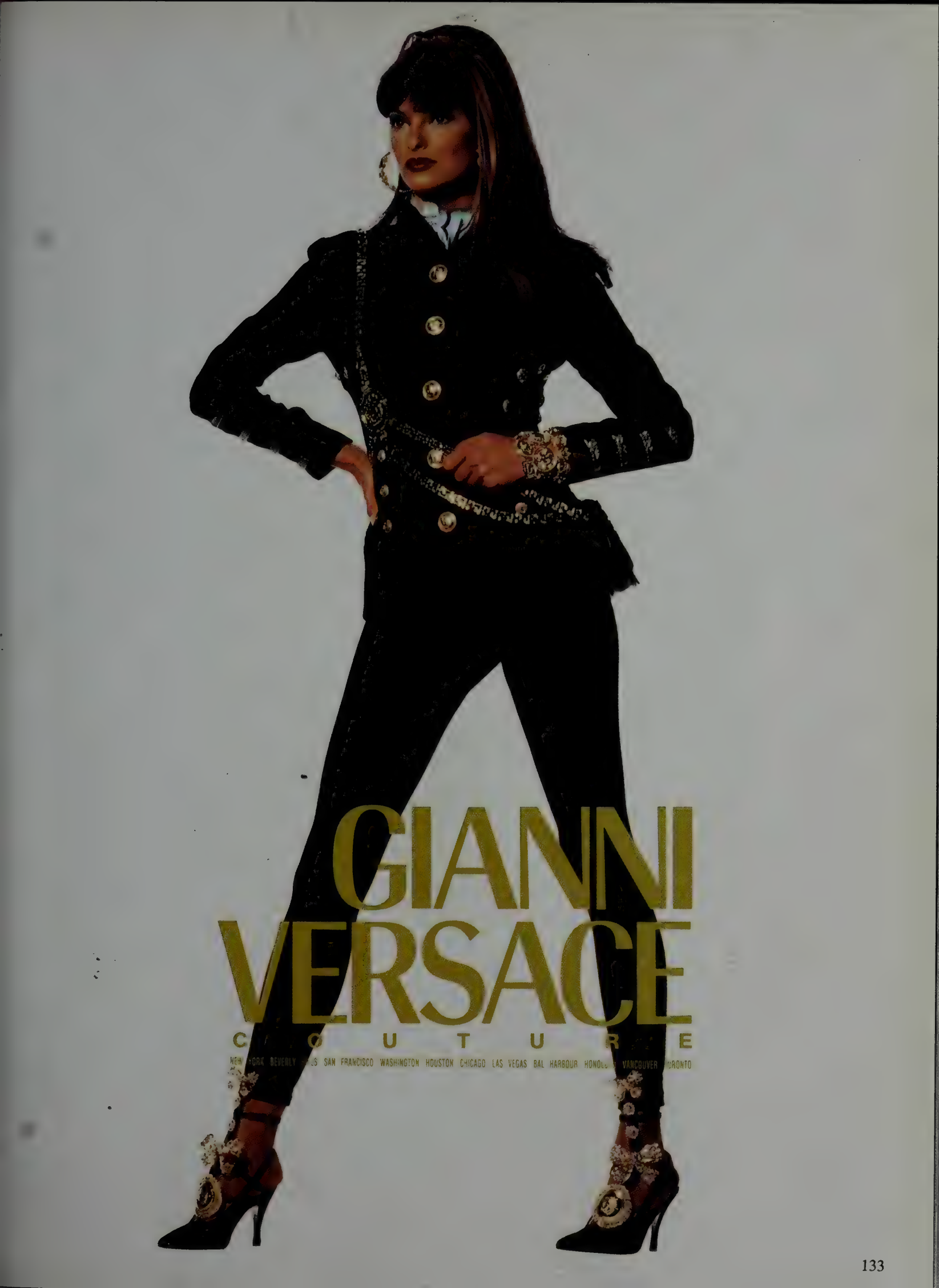
Of course, fan loyalty is always dependent on team performance. Will the Knicks be able to maintain the focus that has enabled them to overachieve so far? Will Checketts and Grunfeld be able to acquire the talent the Knicks need? If the team flames out in the play-offs, will Riley's four championship rings lose their hypnotic spell? When will the players begin to chafe under his Spartan code?

There is an irony behind the sniping that hounded Riley out of L.A. and is beginning to echo, however faintly, in Madison Square Garden. The grumbling is based on Pat Riley's style, not substance. It was the style, the intensity, that rubbed nerves raw in Los Angeles, not the substance of his brilliant record. Among the many reasons the Knick job is attractive to him is that it offers the opportunity to demonstrate that a good coach can transform an average team, that substance can prevail over style. Just because no one sees him sweating, Riley says, doesn't mean he's not.

What the fans and the players see is Mr. Cool. What they don't see is a son playing catch with his dad.

Only on rare occasions, like the New Year's Eve dinner with the Checkettses, or speaking about Magic Johnson and AIDS, does he open up. (Riley chokes up when he says he calls Johnson about twice a week "to touch base" and is awed by his friend's determination to just "go out and live life. The man is born of special stuff.") In January, he suddenly described how he and Chris sobbed through *Father of the Bride*, the bittersweet Steve Martin comedy about a father who loses his daughter to marriage and misses his little girl. At times like these, Riley's emotions rise to the surface. But the next moment, there is about him, the way there was about his father, a seemingly impenetrable distance.

"The most important lesson that I took from my father is control," explains Pat Riley. "When I was a player I always hated coaches who lost control. My father just carried himself in a way that you always knew he was in control of his emotions. That's the way he was. A sense of self-control in any situation." □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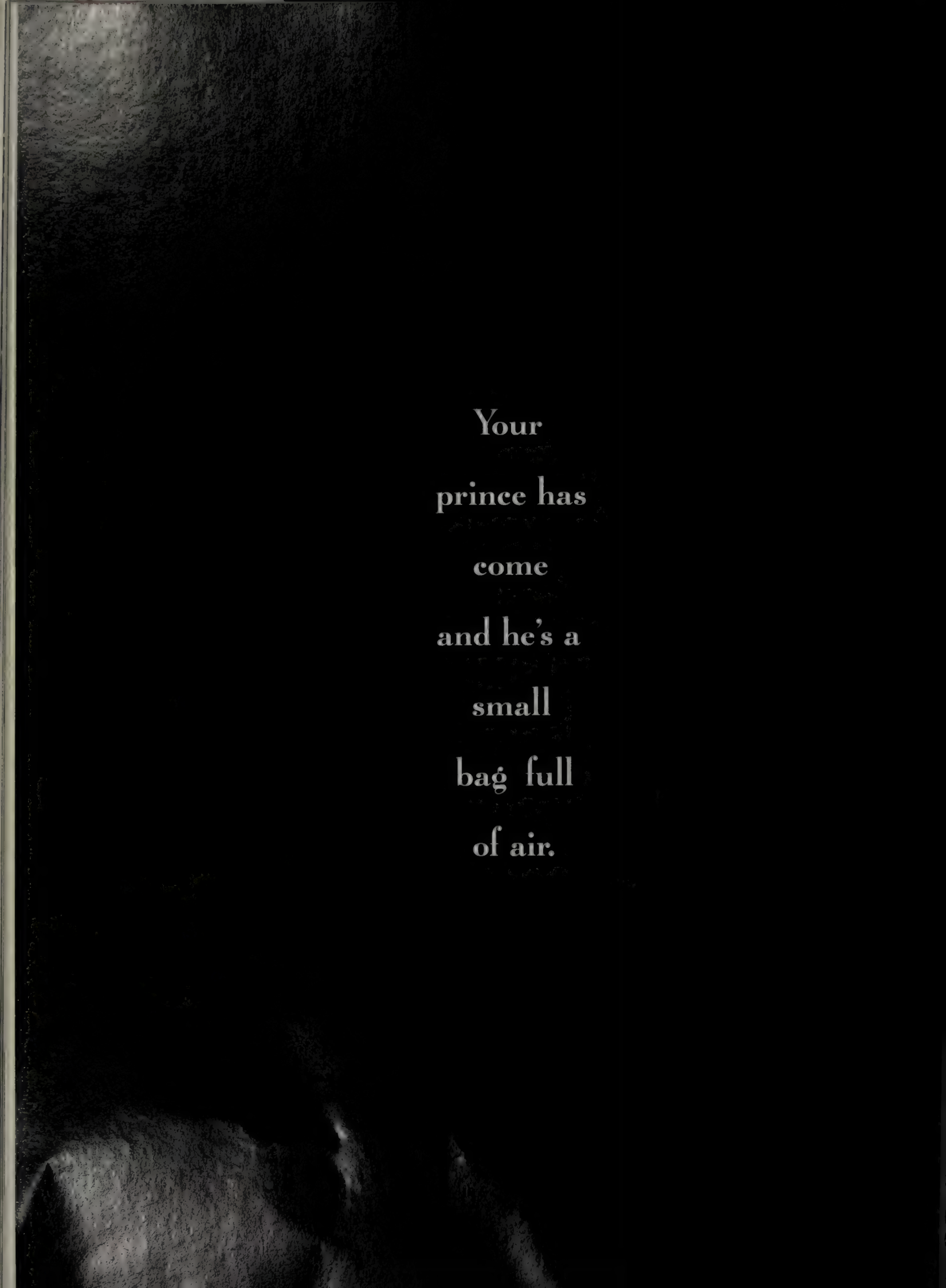
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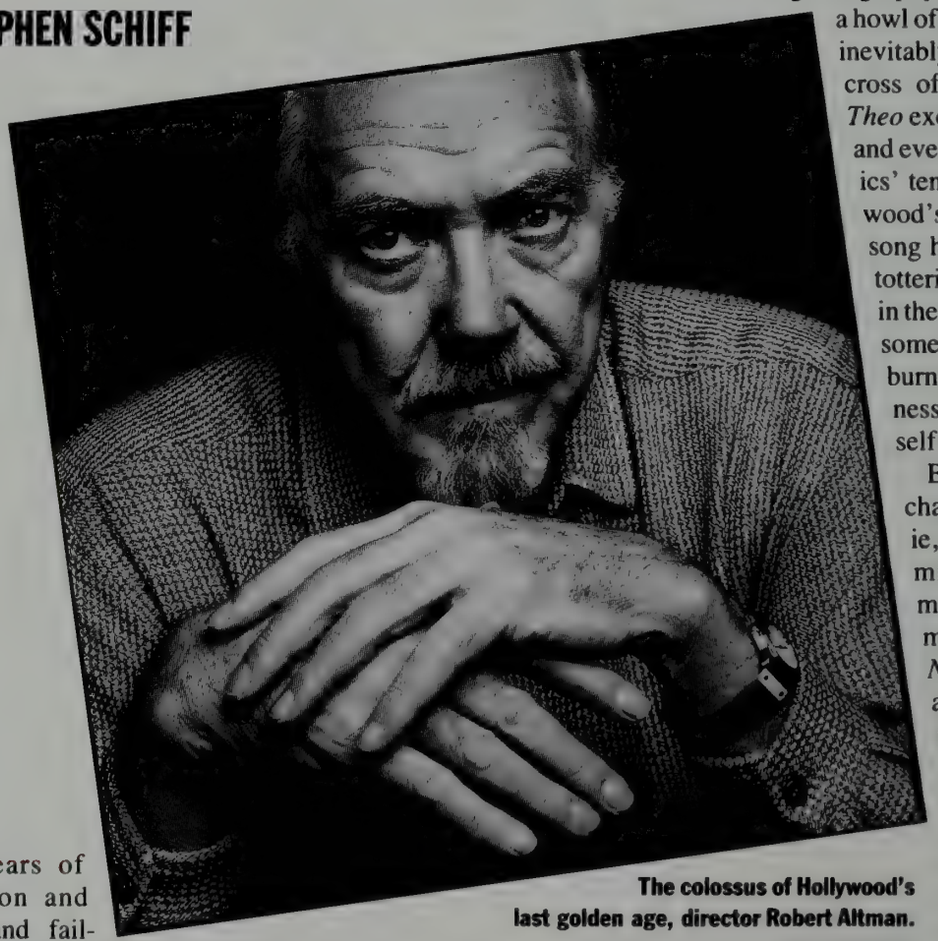
AUTEUR! AUTEUR!

Robert Altman's brilliant new movie—a darkly hilarious send-up of Showtown—has, with perfect Altman irony, put him back on Hollywood's A-list

BY STEPHEN SCHIFF



The colossus of Hollywood's last golden age, director Robert Altman.

After years of rebellion and exile and failure, the veteran director Robert Altman has finally made a great, big, funny movie that's going to ring bells, knock socks off, throw people for loops, and in general create the commotion of the year. Which is all very well. But does that mean he's about to become a Player?

In Hollywood, a Player is someone the big boys have to reckon with, someone who's decidedly on the game board, whose calls you take, whose dinner invitations you accept, someone who can make a difference to your movie or your studio or your prospects of ever owning beachfront property.

By those standards, it's been a very long time since Altman qualified—if indeed he ever did. Critics and movie buffs rightly regarded him as the colossus of Hollywood's last golden age: between 1970 and 1975 he turned out eight films, six of them out-and-out masterpieces (I'm talking about *M*A*S*H*, *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*, *The Long Goodbye*, *Thieves Like Us*, *California Split*, and *Nashville*). But audiences have generally snubbed him. His most recent box-office hit was *Popeye* in 1980, and the only one before that was *M*A*S*H*, way back in 1970. *Nashville*—with its twenty-four characters, its magically interlinked narratives, and its swirling layers of emotion and sound—changed the world's idea of what an American film could be, but it too gasped and died at the box office, in 1975. After that, Altman's genius seemed to unravel all at once. He drank hard and partied hard and made bad movies, and by the end of the seventies his personal chaos threatened to swallow him alive.

Altman retreated to Paris, burning bridges as he went, and that's where he spent America's Yuppie Years, working on odd projects—theater adaptations (some good, some terrible), TV shows (his *Tanner '88* series for HBO won him an Emmy), and finally his splendid van Gogh biography, *Vincent & Theo* (1990), a howl of dismay about how artists inevitably bleed to death on the cross of commerce. *Vincent & Theo* excited art-house audiences and even wound up on some critics' ten-best lists, but in Hollywood's mind Robert Altman's song had been sung. He was a tottering has-been, a wanderer in the wilderness who, through some combination of booze, burnout, and infernal cussedness, had marginalized himself into the ozone.

But all that is about to change. Altman's new movie, *The Player*, is—why mince words?—another masterpiece, the first Altman has managed since *Nashville* seventeen years ago. Adapted from the well-regarded novel by Michael Tolkin (who is credited with writing the screenplay), the movie towers over its source in every way. It's a real Altman film: exuberantly atmospheric, masterly without being show-offy, complicated yet understated, opulent and light-headed at the same time. It is also one of the smartest, funniest, most penetrating movies about moviemaking ever made.

Movies-about-moviemaking tend to come in two flavors: the celebratory (*Day for Night*, *Singin' in the Rain*) and the sardonic (*Sunset Boulevard*, *The Bad and the Beautiful*, *Barton Fink*). But *The Player* skips blithely beyond both categories to something far richer and stranger—something at once antic and metaphysical. In this film, the usual "scathing satire" of Hollywood is just the beginning. Yes, Altman's studio hotshots are laughable monsters; yes, their language is hilariously tortured and their cars are hilariously shiny and they

NIGEL PARRY

If your jeans fit like a glove, where do you put your hands?
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seem to know more about the varieties of mineral water than about the classic films whose posters glower reprovingly from their walls. Altman is good at this stuff, but he knows that's the easy part. What he really wants to reveal is the psychology beneath the familiar Holly-

wood hypocrisies. If we expect the usual Us vs. Them scenario, with brilliant "creatives" getting the spunk stomped out of them by Armani-clad philistines, Altman's view proves much subtler—and much truer. *The Player* is about how the industry crushes the originality out of anyone who participates in it—any Player, be he writer, director, or production chief.

And that's because the Hollywood system makes it impossible to view the world afresh, to derive inspiration or even information from it. Enter the game and you can't help yourself; everything, from the morning headlines to the person you love, gets ground to movie fodder. Daily life is transformed into a story line, with arcs and plot points and climaxes you can manipulate; the people around you turn into characters—heroes, villains, the Sidekick, the Girl. And perception itself becomes a glittering wide-screen process, with Dolbyized stereophonic sound.

That Altman demonstrates all this without getting windy about it is a feat in itself. That he does so in a movie which is at once a hugely entertaining suspense thriller, a sultry romance, and an irresistibly hip comedy makes for the sweetest revenge.

It almost didn't happen that way. When the producer David Brown optioned Tolkin's novel four years ago (for $2,500), Robert Altman wasn't even on his mind. He shopped it around to James Dearden (who had written *Fatal Attraction* and written and directed *Pascali's Island*) and to director Joseph Ruben, whose *True Believer* was being touted as a hit in the making (it wasn't); neither package could lure the necessary financing. Chevy Chase wanted to star in the movie for a while, but the honchos at Warner Bros., where Chase has an exclusive contract, convinced him it would ruin his image. Then the director Sidney Lumet signed on; *The Player* was on its way to becoming a slick studio thriller. But Lumet is an expensive piece of talent (his going rate is around $2 million a picture, though he will sometimes accept less). That kind of money proved hard to raise, and in the end Lumet accepted another picture instead.

The Player has more stars than any studio could sign, more stars than Mike Ovitz can cram into his breakfast Rolodex.

***The Player*'s all-you-can-eat movie-star buffet, *top*, featuring Nick Nolte and Cher; *above*, Whoopi Goldberg suspects Tim Robbins of murder.**

Which is when Robert Altman showed up. Over breakfast at New York's Westbury Hotel, he told Brown he was born to direct *The Player*, but he was worried, according to Brown, that the moneymen were going to "fuck it up and give him trouble." As a studio executive, Brown had worked with Altman on *M*A*S*H* and *McCabe and Mrs. Miller;* he had seen the director at his best. "I'm a cockeyed optimist," says Brown, "and I thought Altman was a brilliant idea. He wasn't drinking and he wasn't smoking—this film meant something to him." Altman was hired (his fee is said to be something under $500,000) and production money was raised by Cary Brokaw of Avenue Pictures, the artists' manager Nick Wechsler, and Spelling Entertainment, which pre-sold the movie's foreign rights. When the picture was finally completed, for around $8 million, it was screened for the studios, most of whom made "very attractive bids," according to Brown. Yet the winning bid (of $5.1 million) came from the independent distributor New Line Pictures, fat from the profits it had reaped on the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle films. New Line will release the movie through its adult-art-film division, Fine Line, which will treat it not as one film among many but as its major spring release. Which means that Altman may get yet another taste of revenge. *The Player* could prove a small-scale hit.

Why not? In one of the movie's most sublime scenes, our "hero," a studio production executive named Griffin Mill (played by Tim Robbins), defines "certain elements that we need to market a film successfully: Suspense. Laughter. Violence. Hope. Heart. Nudity. Sex. And happy endings. Mainly happy endings." Altman's joke is that his big anti-Hollywood picture actually has all these things—plus one other crucial marketing requirement.

It has stars. Not just two or three or even five. This movie has fifty stars. Maybe more. It's Altman's Revenge, Part III: You want stars? I'll give you more stars than any studio could sign, more stars than Spielberg or Levinson or Joel Silver could attract, more stars than there are in a year of *People* magazine, more stars than Mike Ovitz can cram into his breakfast Rolodex.

Even during his bridge-burning days,

LOREY SEBASTIAN

A sunnier outlook doesn't have much to do with the weather.

Liz Claiborne

SUNGLASSES

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when he industriously alienated scores of writers, producers, and studio executives, Altman never stopped cultivating stars. He gave actors chances they couldn't have had without him, listened to their ideas, incorporated their ad-libs into his famous overlapping dialogues. Altman has always been an actor's idea of a great director: patriarchal, collaborative, admiring, a little bit indulgent. And now the actors are returning the favor. First there are the ones who actually play characters in the film: Tim Robbins, Greta Scacchi, Whoopi Goldberg, Fred Ward, Peter Gallagher, Brion James, Vincent D'Onofrio, Dean Stockwell, Cynthia Stevenson, Richard E. Grant, Sydney Pollack, Lyle Lovett, and Dina Merrill. Unimpressed? All right. But then there are all the other stars, the ones who play themselves in the movie's party and restaurant and movie-within-a-movie scenes: Cher, Julia Roberts, Bruce Willis, Nick Nolte, Anjelica Huston, Susan Sarandon, Jack Lemmon, Andie MacDowell, Lily Tomlin, John Cusack, Jeff Goldblum, Rod Steiger, Harry Belafonte, Shari Belafonte, James Coburn, Malcolm McDowell, Joel Grey, Peter Falk, Steve Allen, Jayne Meadows, Gary Busey, Buck Henry, Elliott Gould, Robert Wagner, Jill St. John, the late Brad Davis, Karen Black, Louise Fletcher, Marlee Matlin, Burt Reynolds, Scott Glenn, Teri Garr, Mimi Rogers, and on and on and on.

That all-you-can-eat movie-star buffet is, among other things, a daunting demonstration of the sheer clout Altman still reserves. Sheer clout, and perhaps something else—perhaps a sense that if Altman calls you, you go, because at the very least it might be fun, and at the most it might be magic.

"Bob would call the stars and ask them for a day's work," says David Brown, "and they would just come. And those who weren't invited were offended."

"The reason I did it was because of Bob," says Jack Lemmon, who is seen playing the piano in one of the movie's party scenes. "I hadn't had a chance to work with him before, and I love his work, and I love him personally. He called up and said, 'Listen, I'm throwing a party.' I said, 'That's terrific. We're there.' He said, 'Well, you're going to be photographed.' I said, 'That's terrific. I'll get a suit.' He said, 'You'll be my orchestra.' I said, 'It's getting better by the minute.' And, God, everybody and their mother's uncle was there. So Felicia and I got all dolled up and away we went, and he said, 'There's the piano,' and I said, 'How about a little Gershwin?' And he said, 'There goes $500,000—for the rights, you know.' He said, 'Make something up.' And I did. It really was like a party—we just sat around and schmoozed. We were all there for the same damn reason: Isn't it great to be here for Bob?"

Altman calls the movie stars "extras"—which gives you an idea of what he's up to. He's using cameo performances in a way they've never been used before: for verisimilitude. Altman places movie stars in his restaurant and party scenes because if you go to certain restaurants and parties in Hollywood those stars are really there. He wants to convey the flavor of a world in which magazine-cover faces show up all around you: they're in line with you at the drugstore; they nod and grin from the next table. If you swim among the stars, life outside the fishtank can start to look remote and unreal. Just like a movie.

If you swim among the stars, life outside the fishtank can start to look remote and unreal. Just like a movie.

But Altman's vengeance doesn't end there. *The Player* begins with a display of directorial virtuosity so dazzling it amounts to an act of defiance. We're on the lot of an unnamed studio, where Griffin Mill has long been heir apparent to the studio boss, Joel Levison (perfectly played by Brion James, an actor who has heretofore distinguished himself portraying a variety of killers and thugs). Rumor has it that Levison is about to hire a hot young executive named Larry Levy (Peter Gallagher) and that Griffin's star is consequently falling. He may even lose his job. The movie opens with the words "Quiet on the set," and a clapper appears in front of us, announcing the tenth take of a scene in Robert Altman's film *The Player*. In short, we're watching a movie within a movie—the very movie, in fact, that we'll hear described by an unhinged screenwriter some two hours later. *The Player* hasn't even begun and already Altman is beckoning us to question what's real.

Now begins the most astonishing trick Altman has performed since the great traffic-jam opening of *Nashville*. A master of the fluid, gliding camera, Altman has always used zoom lenses (which still lend his work a pleasantly anachronistic sixties look) and his custom-made "jib arm" to slither in and out of characters' lives. In an Altman movie, the world looks like a solar system: we enter one planet's orbit only to spin off into another's, and then we rocket out to the wide shot, there to view the harmony of all his dancing spheres. As *The Player*'s opening credits roll, the audience gets its first look at the studio's interlocking jigs. During the next several minutes, we will meet most of the movie's characters, we'll hear a variety of crackbrained "pitches"—"*Ghost* meets *The Manchurian Candidate*," for instance, and "*The Gods Must Be Crazy*, except the Coke bottle is now a television actress"—and we'll glimpse the first clue in the movie's thriller plot.

But that's not all. Among the characters trotting in and out of view is the studio security chief, Walter Stuckel, played by Fred Ward, and though Altman customarily keeps so many conversations buzzing at once that it's impossible to follow them all, we do catch a bit of Walter's. He's nattering on about the greatness of old movies, and particularly about the wonders of the long take—the endless opening crane shot of Orson Welles's *Touch of Evil*, for instance, or the 1948 movie *Rope*, which Alfred Hitchcock directed without any cuts. Walter despises contemporary movies. "I hate all this cut, cut, cut," he says. And then he's gone, and along comes a trio of finance people, and then a tour group of Japanese investors, and then a dozen other plotters and schemers. Finally the credits end, and we recognize what Altman himself has just accomplished: he's shot this entire, dizzying, eight-minute sequence exactly the way Walter would have wanted him to, in a single, swooping crane shot. Without a cut.

Altman spends a lot of that shot peeping into studio windows, the ones where deals are made and pitches delivered. It isn't long before you realize that the windows are like movie screens, and that every time we watch a pitch delivered through one, we're seeing a little movie—a story is being told on a screen.

In fact, screens become a leitmotif in

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The Player; they crop up in nearly every scene, and they're there for a reason. Altman is working out a kind of Hollywood metaphysics. In the eighteenth century, Immanuel Kant caused a "Copernican revolution" in philosophy when he announced that man could never truly know the real world because he was doomed to perceive it through his five limited senses and through the distorting lenses of space and time. Altman adds one more layer of distortion. *Homo hollywoodus* knows even less of the real world because he perceives everything as though it were happening on a screen. It's a sickness, this distortion, and in Tinseltown the sickness is systemic: nobody's immune and nobody's happy about it. And the self-loathing it generates among suspendered honchos and ink-stained wretches alike inevitably arouses alienation and even paranoia.

Altman with Julie Christie on the set of *McCabe and Mrs. Miller.*

Which is probably why Griffin becomes so unhinged when he starts receiving menacing unsigned postcards from a struggling screenwriter—apparently one Griffin never got back to. The postcards are fairly explicit. That writer, whoever he is, wants to kill him.

The Player isn't much on plot, but what there is thickens quickly. Griffin tracks down the screenwriter he thinks is threatening him, one David Kahane (Vincent D'Onofrio), whom he finds in a movie theater watching *The Bicycle Thief.* Here is another one of Altman's screens, and there's yet another in the *karaoke* bar where Kahane takes Griffin for a drink. But the most important screen in *The Player* is the metaphorical one on which Griffin has already discovered Kahane's girlfriend, June (Greta Scacchi). Looking for Kahane, Griffin drives to the writer's house, dials Kahane's number on his mobile phone, and then, under cover of night, peers through the window as June answers. Watching her talk to him on the phone gives Griffin a voyeuristic jolt, a frisson that he can't shake. "It was so exciting and new and strange," he will later tell June, but what he means is that looking at her in this way, as if her window were a movie screen, has made her seem like a star to him—like the co-star he requires for the film he's living. (Later, Griffin takes June to Desert Hot Springs, an immaculate spa whose only denizens are so beautiful they look as though they were sent straight from the agency. "Do places like this really exist?" June asks. "Only in the movies," Griffin replies.)

If Altman calls you, you go, because at the very least it might be fun, and at the most it might be magic.

Tim Robbins, who is probably best remembered as the half-crazy minor-league pitcher Nuke Laloosh in *Bull Durham,* is wonderfully cast as Griffin—not just because he's a terrific actor, but also because he has the squinched-up, rubbery face of a newborn baby. That face is like unmolded clay; you can do anything with it. And since Griffin is busily striving to turn himself into the suave leading man of his own living movie, the poses he strikes—of mastery, of sophistication, of know-how—stand out on that baby face as if in high relief.

Altman has always pretended that he doesn't know much about directing actors, but his work here betrays him. The character of June, for instance, is little more than a postliterate cipher, but Altman draws from Greta Scacchi the warmest, most genuinely sensual performance she's ever given. He lets Dean Stockwell go bananas as a hustling movie producer, lets Richard E. Grant get all neurasthenic and quavery as a hard-pitching screenwriter, and gives the director and sometime actor Sydney Pollack room to chew gum and spout tough-guy aphorisms as Griffin's lawyer; Pollack responds by carving out the perfect portrait of a Player. Best of all, Altman gets an exhilarating, loosey-goosey performance from Whoopi Goldberg, as a police detective who suspects Griffin of murder. There's a scene in the Pasadena police station, with Goldberg twirling a Tampax as she questions Griffin about his sex life, that's destined to be a classic; its capper comes when Griffin tries to defend himself with the kind of high-minded harangue that works only in the movies—and the whole station cracks up in disbelief.

There's a chill at the center of *The Player.* Altman gets us rooting for Griffin by subtle degrees—first, because his job is threatened; later, because he's in love and in trouble. But the movie needles us by degrees, too, by gradually exposing Griffin's corruption. If we're cheering Griffin on even though he's a cad (and worse), that makes us somehow accomplices in his perfidy. And, in the end, when he prevails while the nice but decidedly less glamorous folk around him tumble, Altman slathers on the triumphant music and sunshine in a way that may make us squirm. He's not letting anyone off the hook—not even the audience. After all, we're part of the system, too. We're the ones clamoring for "*Ghost* meets *The Manchurian Candidate*"; we're the ones drooling over Bruce and Arnold and Julia and Mel. No one leaves *The Player* with a clear conscience.

Yet what finally keeps this movie from being downright distasteful is its unquenchable glee. "It's a bright, guilty world," observed Orson Welles in *The Lady from Shanghai;* he might have been describing the sunbaked, irremediably trivial planet on which Altman's insects scrabble and claw. Coming only two years after the gloom of *Vincent & Theo, The Player* is surprisingly high-spirited and ebullient. For long stretches, Altman's restless camera roams Lotusland like a merry truffle pig, snurfing out all manner of nuttiness and pretension and squealing with joy as the schemes and reversals and in-jokes fly overhead.

In other words, *The Player* feels like a party. It's layered and trenchant and even profound, but it's also an awful lot of fun. Better still, it looks as though poor, bedeviled Robert Altman had a lot of fun making it. That, in the end, may be the sweetest revenge of all. □

O. Toscani

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Smoking in the boys' room: The Kids in the Hall are (left to right) Bruce McCulloch, Kevin McDonald, Scott Thompson, Mark McKinney, and Dave Foley.

Hall of the Wild

Three years ago the comedy clique known as the Kids in the Hall burst out of Toronto, causing simultaneous confusion on television screens on both sides of the border. Their send-ups went where humor had never gone before. Their subjects—AIDS, suburbia, perverts, and parents—outpaced the tepid laugh cues of American shows. Despite an upcoming American tour and success on HBO, they still don't feel like celebrities. "We love getting a free lunch at those Hollywood power places and counting face-lifts," kids Haller Scott Thompson, "but we won't trade humor for stardom."

—KIKI MASON

Photograph by RICHARD PICTON

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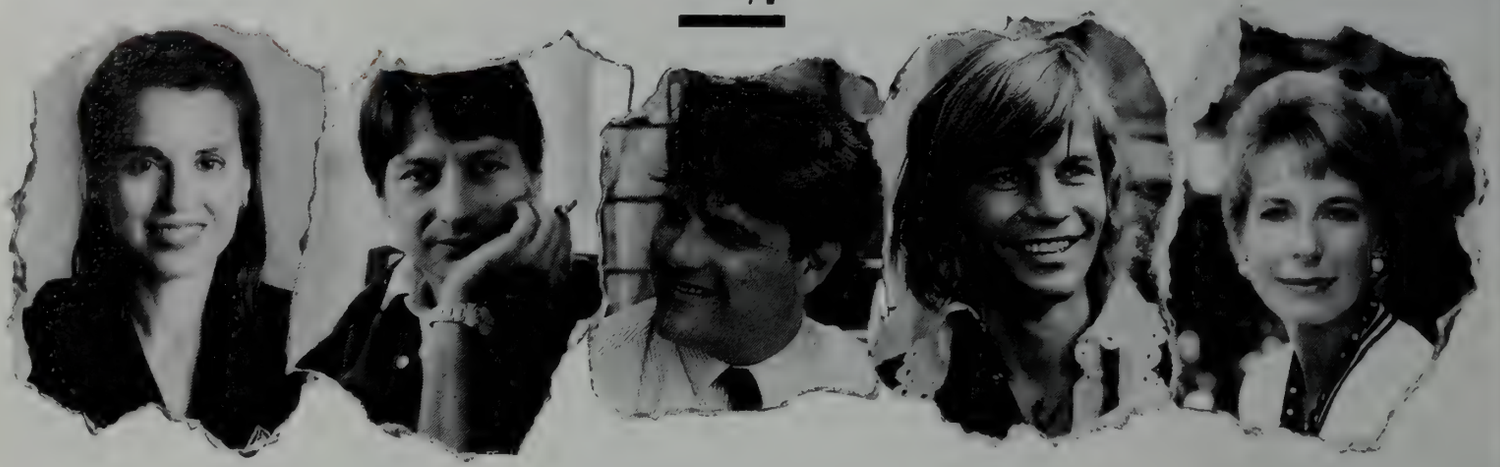


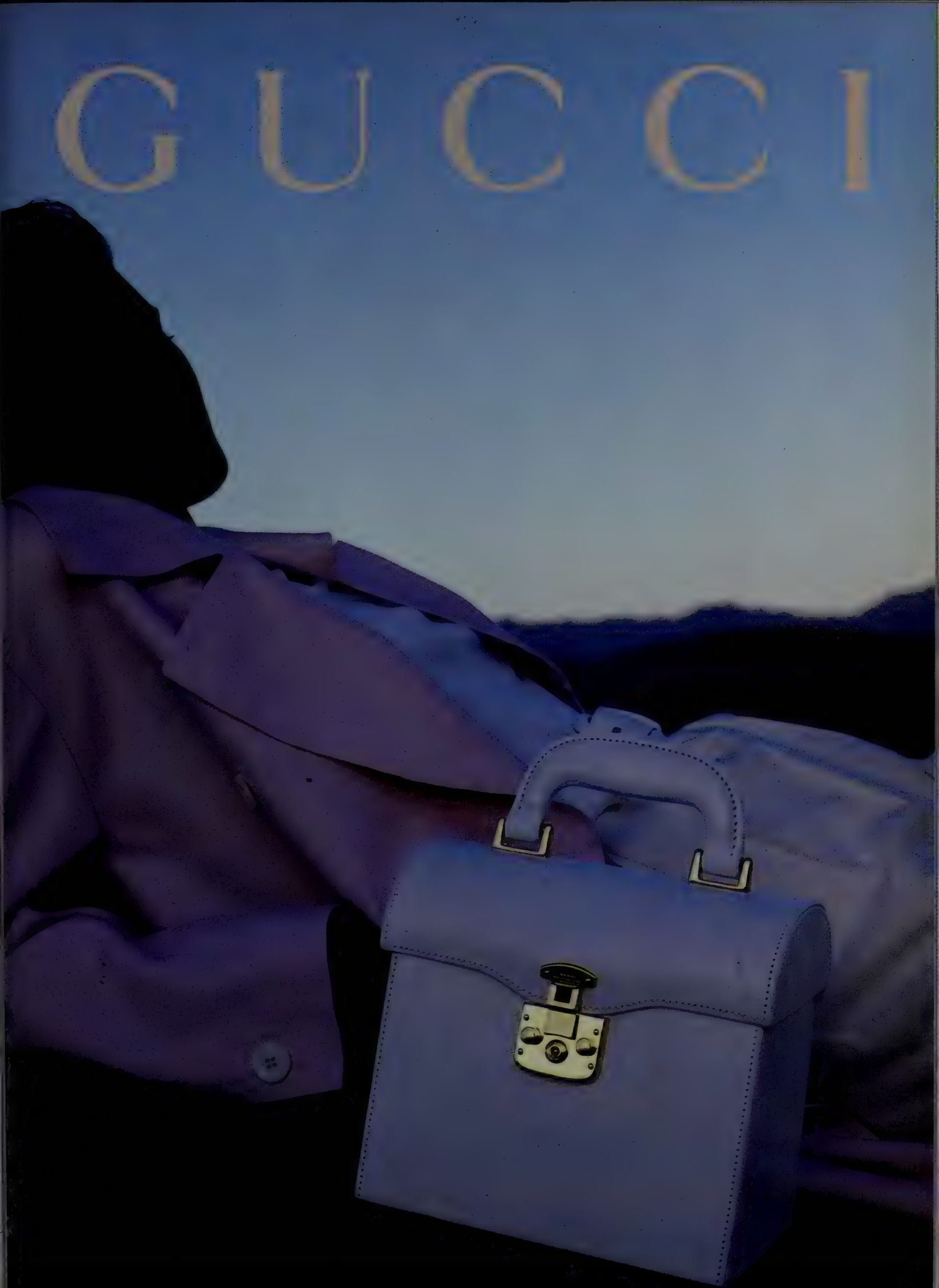
Gioia Diliberto *P. J. O'Rourke* *Paul Rosenfield* *Michael York* *Gail Sheehy*

In **Very Old Bones** (Viking), William Kennedy revisits the far-flung fortunes of Albany's Phelan family. **The Chairman** (Simon & Schuster), by Kai Bird, is the first complete biography of John McCloy, power broker of the American postwar Establishment. Harlem, 1926, is the setting for Toni Morrison's haunting new novel, **Jazz** (Knopf). Paul Rosenfield deconstructs Hollywood's star-power system in **The Club Rules** (Warner). Dore Ashton analyzes the influence of Isamu Noguchi's bicultural heritage on his art in **Noguchi East and West** (Knopf). Haiti and upper-class New York turn out to be remarkably similar in Francine Prose's acerbic new novel, **Primitive People** (Farrar, Straus and Giroux). Gioia Diliberto draws on previously unavailable correspondence for **Hadley** (Ticknor & Fields), her biography of Hadley Richardson, Hemingway's greatest love. Eric Larsen re-examines an extraordinary midwestern marriage in his novel **I Am Zoë Handke** (Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill). In **Accidentally on Purpose** (Simon & Schuster), actor Michael York remembers Oxford, the National Theatre, and *Cabaret*. Stephen Bayley's **Taste** (Pantheon) is a humorous history of the trappings and traps of high style. Kelvin Christopher James chronicles life in Trinidad and Harlem in **Jumping Ship and Other Stories** (Villard). Gail Sheehy expands upon her groundbreaking October 1991 *V.F.* feature on menopause in her new book, **The Silent Passage** (Random House). P. J. O'Rourke brings his quirky point of view to tyranny, injustice, and alcohol-free beer in **Give War a Chance** (Atlantic Monthly Press).

Shoe Business

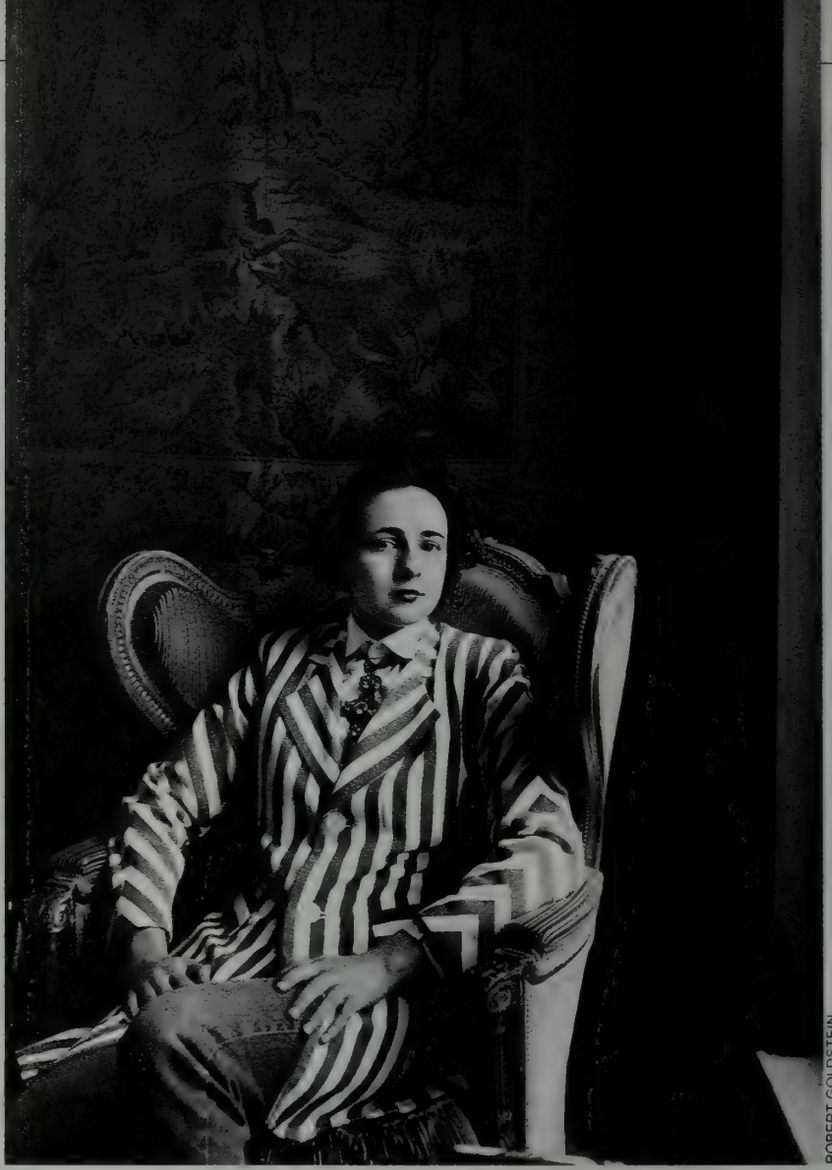
In ancient Greece, courtesans wore sandals whose soles left the imprint "Follow me." As Salvatore Ferragamo: The Art of the Shoe, *a new book (Rizzoli) and exhibition (L.A. County Museum), makes clear, the message sent by the master cobbler's wares was equally alluring. Ferragamo fashioned fantasy shoes from eighteen-karat gold and tree bark, commemorated the opening of King Tut's tomb with an inverted-pyramid heel, invented the wedge, and sold Garbo seventy pairs in a day. "I am very happy," Ferragamo wrote, "to have awakened in women the desire for good shoes."* —AMY FINE COLLINS

Sole survivor: Ferragamo's gold kid sandal with suede-covered cork platform heel, 1938.


GUCCI

Blow by Blow

"In these times there's limited support for Georgian frock coats," sighs British fashion designer Selina Blow, who nevertheless specializes in wickedly foppish, faultlessly tailored ensembles cut from such flamboyant fabrics as iridescent velvet. Homages to the great pre-twentieth-century dandies, "including Ivan the Terrible and Louis XIV," her suits also evoke "Cruella De Vil and Snow White's evil queen." Blow's taste for fine workmanship was passed down from her grandfather, celebrated Arts and Crafts architect Detmar Blow, while her exotic palette derives from her maternal antecedents, freedom-fighting Sri Lankan statesmen. Her collection now includes "less theatrical" ready-to-wear "that absolutely can be worn before 1:30 A.M." —A.F.C.



ROBERT GOLDSTEIN

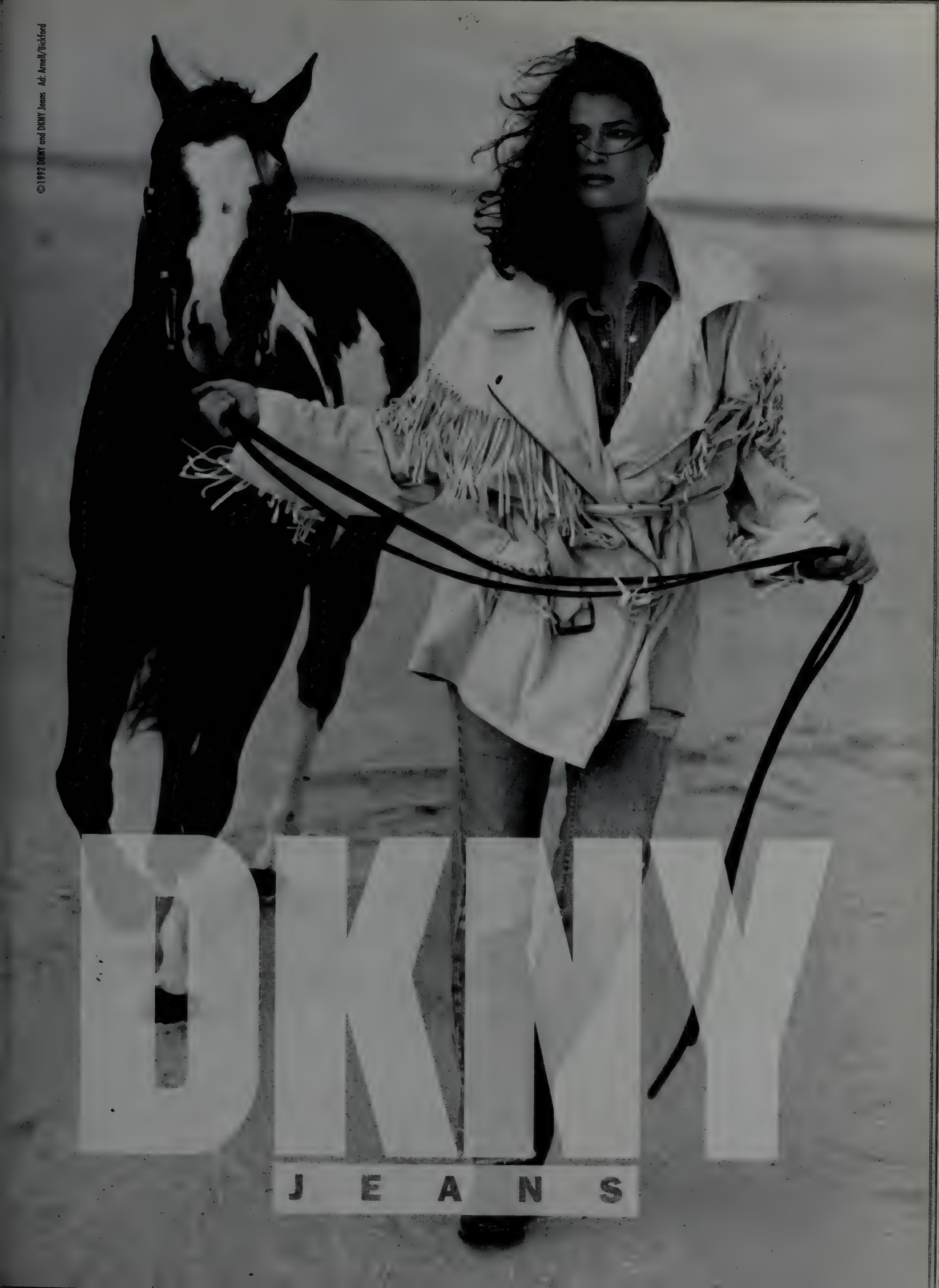
Blow against the empire: Designer Selina Blow in London.

JILLIAN EDELSTEIN

The Young Globe

Joshua Bowler and Orlando Campbell are the sexiest men with bags under their eyes in London. The duo stay up late running the Globe, their hip new club in the Afro-meets-aristo area of Notting Hill—and they are no strangers to the high life. Bowler's first employer was Lord Glenconner, who hired him as sports instructor on the exclusive island of Mustique, while Campbell is the great-grandson of Lord Harlech. Bowler and Campbell's Globe fans include Lucian Freud, Mick Jagger, and other hauts bohèmes *charmed into parting with an annual £120 membership fee for the informal ambience, the no-frills food, and the novelty of a neighborhood club which has a license to serve drinks until three A.M.* —KATE MORRIS

The Globe is their oyster: Joshua Bowler and Orlando Campbell.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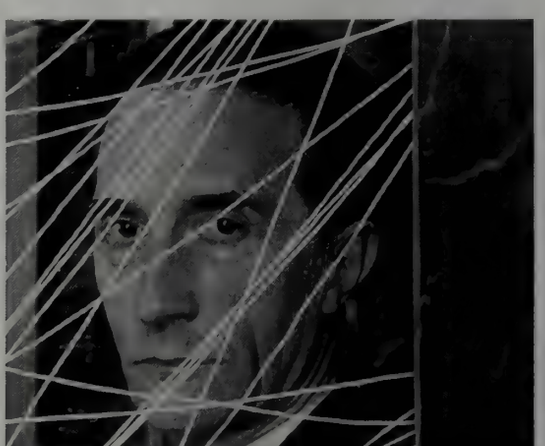
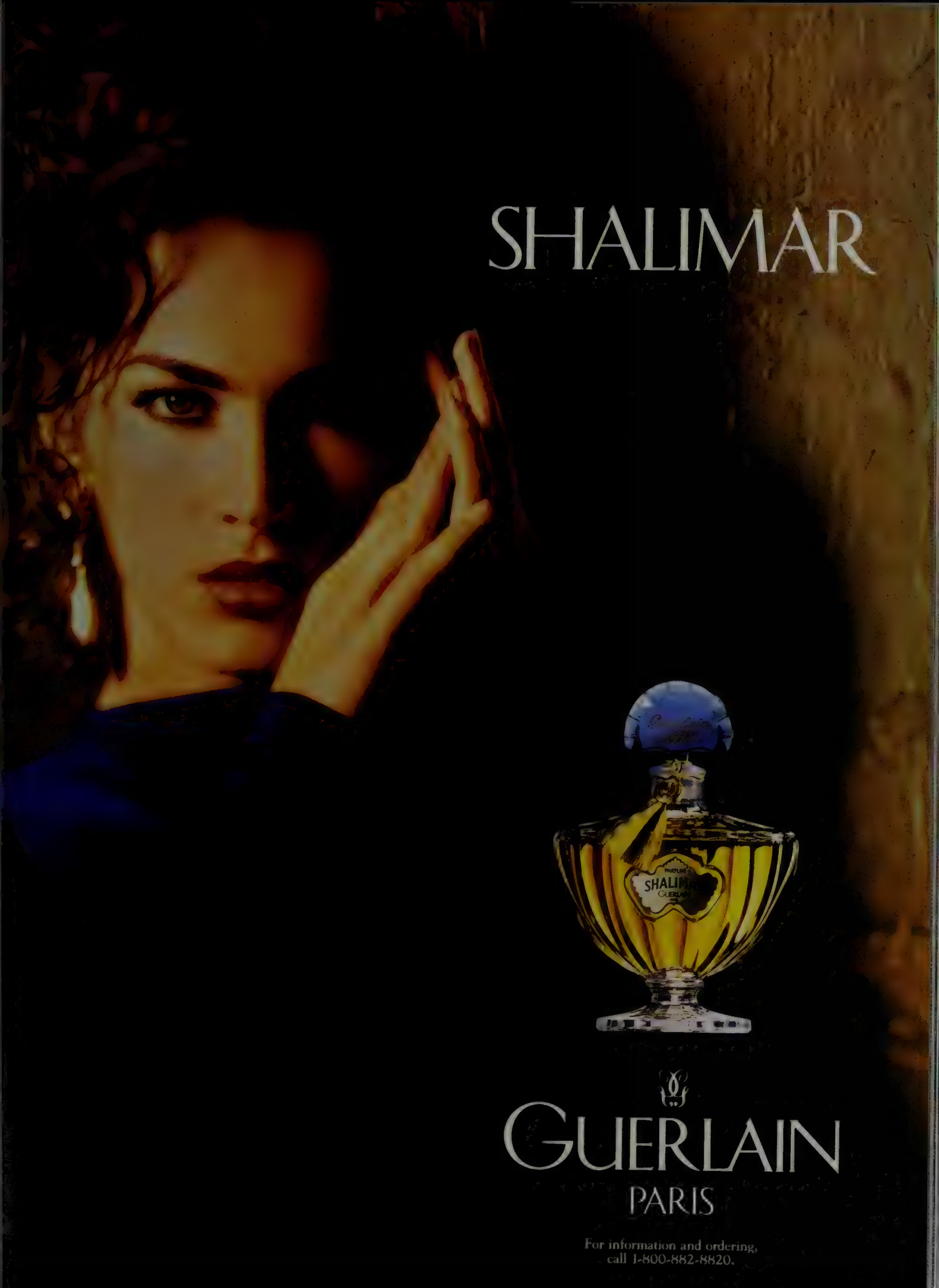
Newman's Eye

The photographer Arnold Newman never forces himself upon a famous face. Instead, with the help of his subject, he finds the revealing pose and place. Diana Vreeland perches on her couch with the stylish panache of one of her whorled seashells. The older Truman Capote feels under no obligation to be the sensitive young Truman staring out from an earlier portrait. Instead, he flops down, in blissful deterioration.

Now the subject of a handsome book, published by Bullfinch Press, and an exhibition called "Arnold Newman's Americans" at the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C., Newman, over the last fifty years, has photographed everyone from artists to atomic scientists. Without fail his work is a warm-spirited response to the person on the other side of the lens. "We don't take photographs with our cameras," he says, "we take them with our hearts and minds." —MARK STEVENS



Pictures at the exhibition, clockwise from top: *Sammy Cahn (left) with Jimmy Van Heusen, 1963; Marcel Duchamp, 1942; Diana Vreeland, 1974; and Truman Capote, 1977.*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Horsing around: Actress Amy Madigan.

Mad About Madigan

When directors want a likable toughie, they get Amy Madigan, the wiry dynamo who, from Field of Dreams *to TV's* Roe vs. Wade, *inevitably gets a chance to tell everyone off. "Are you trying to say I have a big mouth?" she laughs when this is suggested. The actress (who is married to Ed Harris) won't necessarily be any less confrontational playing Stella opposite Jessica Lange and Alec Baldwin in Broadway's revival of* A Streetcar Named Desire. *"The scratch factor we can find pretty easily," she says, making an angry cat noise. "These women are sisters, but my character just says, 'Bye. I'm not gonna go down with the sinking ship.' "*

—MICHAEL MUSTO

Night-table Reading

Twiggy Lawson *(actress):* The Invisible Woman, *by Claire Tomalin (Knopf). "The astonishing story of Nelly Ternan, Dickens's hidden mistress. It reads as a romantic detective novel, uncovering hidden letters and buried secrets."*

David Geffen *(entrepreneur):* Den of Thieves, *by James Stewart (Simon & Schuster). "Completely compelling. I absolutely loved it."*

Al Hirschfeld *(illustrator):* Unpopular Essays, *by Bertrand Russell (Simon & Schuster). "I've reread this little book several times across the years; I bought it secondhand, published at a paperback price of one dollar. This excellent book is original and witty."*

Nadine Strossen *(president of the A.C.L.U.):* Haroun and the Sea of Stories, *by Salman Rushdie (Granta Books). "Written by a hostage to ugly dogmatism, this fabulous tale is a beautiful celebration of freedom, fantasy, and poetry."*

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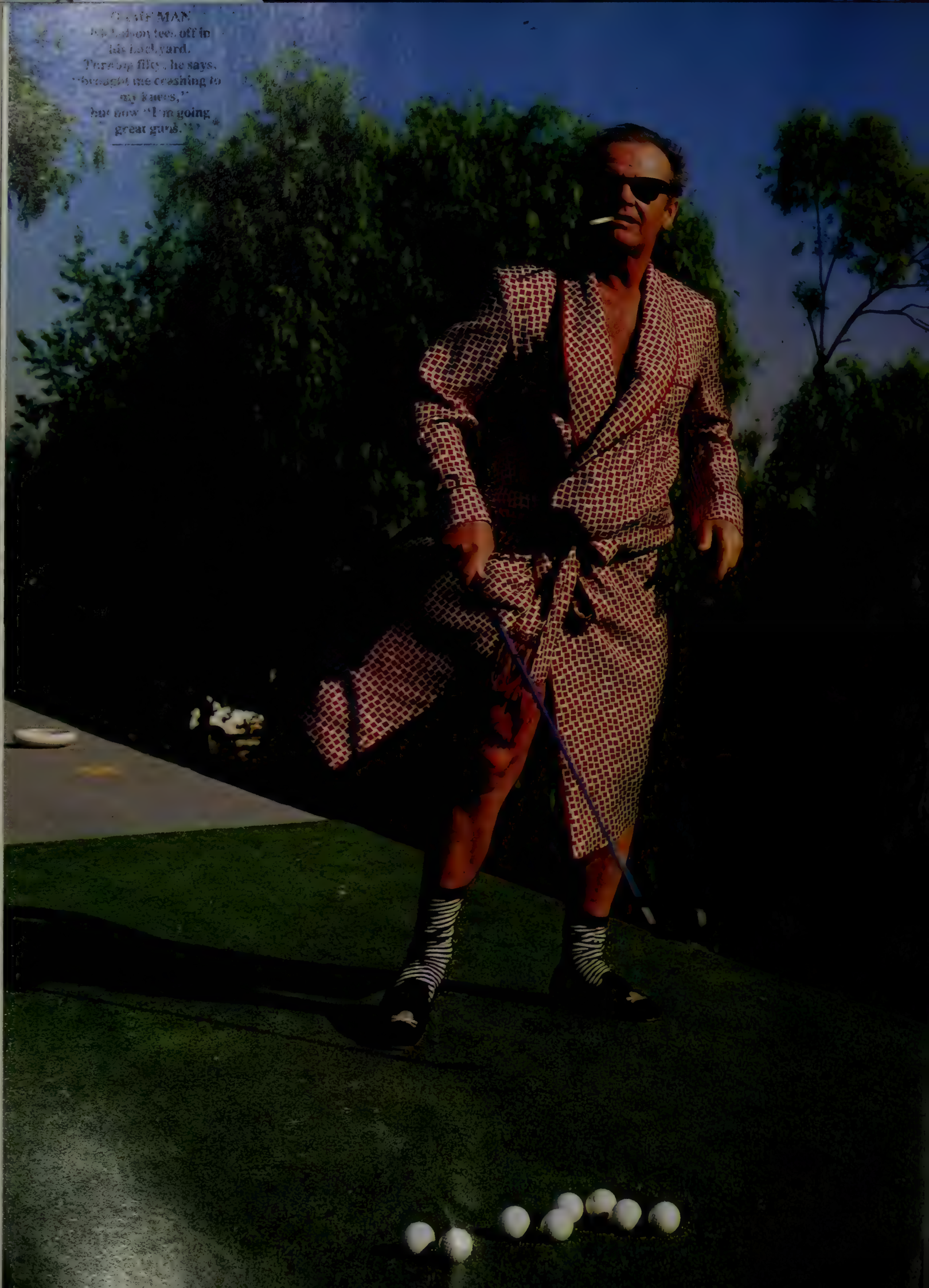

GAME MAN
[illegible] teed off in
his backyard.
Turning fifty, he says,
"brought me crashing to
my knees,"
but now "I'm going
great guns."

Happy Jack

Jack Nicholson may look
as if he's settling down as he celebrates
his second child
with Rebecca Broussard,
lines up three new movies, and counts the
fortune he's made as one of
the first actors to get profit percentages.
But as NANCY COLLINS discovers,
at fifty-four
the hippest guy in Hollywood
is still ready to tear it up

Photographs by ANNIE LEIBOVITZ • Styled by MARINA SCHIANO

BATHROBE BY CHARVET AT BERGDORF GOODMAN; SUNGLASSES BY RAY-BAN

"I'm totally unashamed of my way of living." Jack Nicholson, Marlboro clenched tightly in his teeth, is leaning in close to my face, intent on explaining what might appear to be his rather unorthodox life with Rebecca Broussard, the twenty-eight-year-old mother of his two children. Broussard, as Nicholson speaks, is waiting out the last month of her second pregnancy, a countdown that has Nicholson admittedly "jumpy, like a cat," aware that any day THE CALL could come from her house to his house.

Her house to his house?

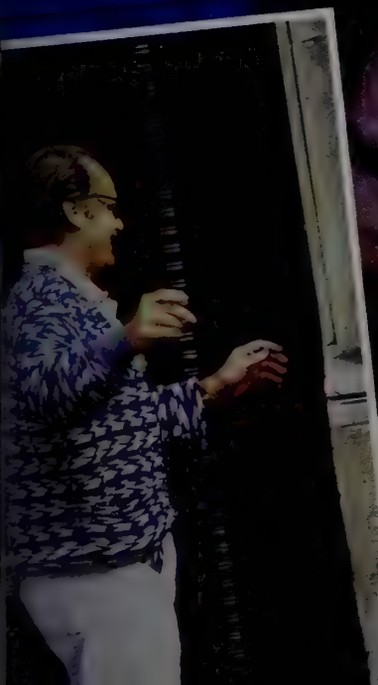
Right. Jack Nicholson does not live with the mother of two-year-old Lorraine and baby Raymond (born February 20). His home is the same house on Mulholland Drive he bought for himself more than twenty years ago, a two-story California number whose walls are chockablock with a mind-boggling array of world-class art: Picasso, Modigliani, Botero, Matisse. Broussard, meanwhile, shares her house—in the San Fernando Valley, bought for her by Nicholson—with the kids.

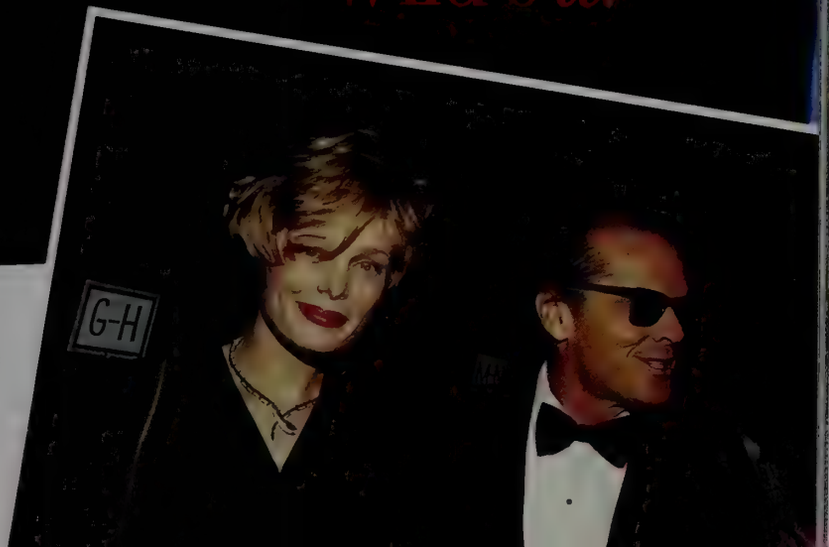
"It's an unusual arrangement, but the last twenty-five years or so have shown me that I'm not good at cohabitation," Nicholson states unself-consciously. "All Rebecca had to do was see the advantages that were actually there . . . and have the balls to go with it. That's all it took. And I admire her. She ain't no patsy. I see Rebecca as much as any other person who is cohabiting. And *she* prefers it. I think most people would in a more honest and truthful world."

He takes a long drag on his cigarette. When he exhales, his voice is barely above a whisper. "It's really a question of architecture, not morality. Look at it as a two-bedroom apartment—this house and her house—with the grounds in between. Yeah, it's so big you've gotta drive from one end to the other, but we don't pay the gardener. Besides, what's really at the heart of this matter is, you gotta

FAMILY MAN
With Rebecca Broussard and baby Lorraine in Paris, 1990. "Having a baby is very big. You don't want to make people envious, but everything else is peanuts."

"She's a babe, She's what I like, She's wild. Wild's *it.*"





NOT THE JONESES
Far left: Broussard, during her second pregnancy, with Lorraine in the house Nicholson bought for them. *Near left: en famille* in Paris, September 1991. *Right:* at the 1990 "Carousel of Hope" benefit for combating children's diabetes.

stop living for the Joneses."

Not that Jack Nicholson ever has. In fact, he has been the quintessential iconoclast—the fifties Kerouac Beat, a cat so cool his act has played and endured through three Hollywood decades and women as diverse as Michelle Phillips and Anjelica Huston. He loved them all, he says, especially Huston. Their volatile seventeen-year relationship served them both well: he gave her sex appeal, she gave him class. They, too, lived and did not live together, and Nicholson cheerfully admits that he is not monogamous by nature. He has been equally difficult to pin down in his work. In the course of two years, for instance, he starred in both the artistic tour de force *Ironweed* and the wildly commercial *Batman*. He didn't expect the former would make money, while his back-end deal on the latter—he received a percentage of the gross profits—reportedly earned him close to $50 million.

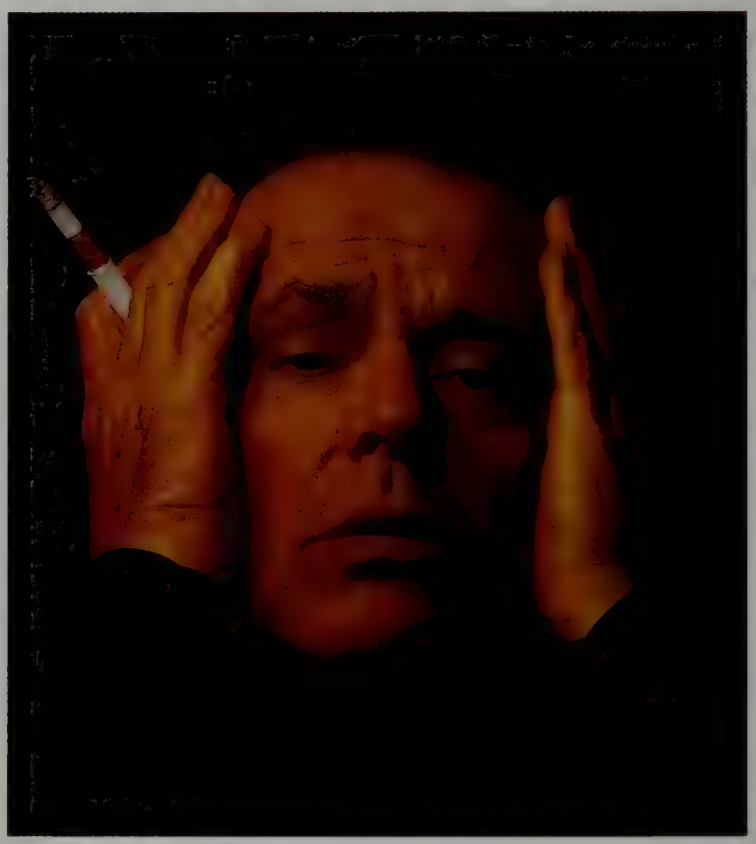
"Jack's career was based on being a puncturer of the balloons of pomposity," says writer-producer Don Devlin, who has known Nicholson for more than thirty years. "He was the anti-Establishment guy, which is why young people always loved him so much. Well, the irony now is, because of the length of his career and how successful he's become, Jack *is* the Establishment."

Indeed, in a business where money masquerades as art and box-office receipts constitute culture, Nicholson dominates the industry on his own terms. Not only is he one of the richest actors in Hollywood, he is also, arguably, its most revered artist. As Robin Williams so aptly put it, "There's Jack and there's the rest of us."

Though the birth of his third child (he has a twenty-eight-year-old daughter, Jennifer, by his former and only wife, Sandra Knight) is by far the most important item on his current agenda, Nicholson is awash in work. Last January he finished production on Rob Reiner's *A Few Good Men*, co-starring Tom Cruise. He is currently shooting *Hoffa*, the Danny DeVito–directed film, in which he portrays the controversial union leader. And this month *Man Trouble*, co-starring Ellen Barkin, will be released, reuniting Nicholson with the *Five Easy Pieces* team of director Bob Rafelson and screenwriter Carole Eastman.

Man Trouble, a comedy, "is thematically about the harmful effects of movie violence on women," says Nicholson. But it is also a love story between Barkin, in the role of a prim classical singer, and Nicholson, who plays a trainer of guard dogs. "The movie," he says, "is going to have to stand or fall on the charm of that relationship." The Barkin-Nicholson relationship is indeed fetching, and it played well on- and off-camera. "Ellen is a great gal. Women hate it when I call them 'great gals.' I assume they think it's corn-ball." Nicholson shakes his head in confusion. "On the set, Ellen had a beautiful Irish husband, and a son named Jack," he continues. "I had my baby, and Rebecca. Ellen knew Rebecca was pregnant this [second] time before I did. Rebecca was coming to tell me, and she ran—hysterical—into Ellen first."

"Violence is a bad habit. Kiss a tit, it's an X. Hack it off with a sword, PG."



The plot of *Man Trouble* was almost more complicated offscreen than on. Rafelson and Eastman, who Nicholson assures me adore each other as people, have always had a contentious working relationship. In fact, according to Nicholson, Eastman has never recovered from her first outing with Rafelson. "For someone to be upset about *Five Easy Pieces* for twenty years requires being slightly overtuned in the control area," he comments. "But that's who Carole, lovably, is." Director Rafelson had to cope with a screenwriter who came to have almost equal clout in the decision-making. As a result, Nicholson ended up as mediator. "When you're doing a comedy, you hope it's going to be a cakewalk because you're not dealing with anything heavy. But I tried to think of any movie I ever made that was easy, and I couldn't. Every one was brutal, a battle."

On this eighty-degree January afternoon in Los Angeles, Nicholson greets me at his house for what is our third conversation in eight years. During each previous encounter his life had been in a state of flux. We first met in 1984, just after he finished *Terms of Endearment* and created the Oscar-winning role of Gar-

COGITATING MAN
Jack on the American political process: "Don't you think Gary Hart would be the best candidate to run against Bush? And why isn't he here? Because he fucks, that's why."

rett Breedlove, the lascivious former astronaut who made guys with a gut glamorous. *Terms* pulled Nicholson out of one of his few career slumps and moved him gracefully into playing middle-aged on-screen. Personally, he was still involved with Huston, whose own acting career was nowhere, relegated as she then was to performing in tiny L.A. theaters. Though Nicholson fared better professionally, he was at that moment, despite *Terms*, an unemployed actor, hoping, like any other, that something marvelous would turn up.

It did. By the summer of 1990, when we met again, Nicholson had created, among other roles, the Joker. With money pouring in from thousands of *Batman* T-shirts and lunchpails, Nicholson had catapulted into the financial stratosphere. On almost all other fronts, however, his life was in disarray. He was locked into twenty-hour days editing *The Two Jakes* (which he had also directed), a troubled production that saw Nicholson and screenwriter Robert Towne, close friends since the late 1950s, split the sheets. Though thrilled with the arrival of Lorraine, three months before, Nicholson was still coping with Huston's having exited. In an attempt, it seemed, to control *something*, he had started a liquid diet (on which he ultimately dropped forty pounds), living on cigarettes, diet shakes, and endless bottles of Evian. He was overworked, overwrought, and still stunned from the monumental changes in his personal life.

It is a totally different man who comes to the door this time. Nicholson is relaxed and calm. He clutches in his teeth a tar-reducing cigarette filter, a nod to the vice he's been trying to dump, he wryly notes, for "only about thirty-five years."

At fifty-four he no longer, of course, has the wiry good looks of that crazy-like-a-fox hero of the mental ward, R. P. McMurphy. The crease above his eyes is now etched firmly into his forehead and the hair is thinner. But beyond that it's still that magnetic Nicholson puss.

Jack Nicholson lives a complicated life in a simple house. The furniture is comfortably masculine, unpretentious: spacious armchairs, deep couches, oversize ottomans. Books are piled everywhere. In a town where nouveau art collectors build mausoleums for their acquisitions, Nicholson's are casually displayed: a green-and-blue Chagall on one wall, a Tamara de Lempicka on another. Since the house sits "up in the air," there are no grounds, although a spectacular panorama of prime California property can be seen through sliding glass doors. "The movement of this house is great," boasts Nicholson of the open kitchen, dining, and living areas. "You can't get trapped in it."

Nicholson fiddles with the CD player, tells his longtime personal assistant, Annie Marshall, to hold his calls, and settles into a well-used armchair, ready to talk. The only interruption occurs when he goes upstairs to take a call from Broussard. She has declined an interview request, but pictures scattered around Nicholson's house reveal her to be an extremely pretty, scrubbed-faced, blue-eyed blonde whose short hair sweeps loosely off her face.

These days Nicholson's life clearly revolves around his new family. "His family is now his biggest outside interest," says director Rafelson, "and *(Continued on page 222)*

SPOTLIGHT

Emma Appeal

In case you hadn't guessed, the photo is Deeply Symbolic. That's the actress Emma Thompson, and if you still think of her as merely Mrs. Kenneth Branagh, the photo is telling you you've got things Upside Down. Or Ass Backward. Or, at the very least, you haven't been paying attention. True, you might not have heard of Thompson before her imperiously spunky performance as Katherine in her husband's celebrated film of *Henry V*. Or maybe you caught her first as the amnesiac in his surprise hit *Dead Again*. But what did Kenneth Branagh have to do with her sexy comic turn in *The Tall Guy*? Or with her winsome portrayal of the art-groupie duchess in last year's *Impromptu*, in which she popped her huge eyes and back-teased her dialogue until it curled?

All that was prologue. In *Howards End*, the sublime new film adapted from the E. M. Forster novel by James Ivory, Ismail Merchant, and Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, Thompson plays Margaret Schlegel, the story's moral center, and the sheer elegance she brings to the role is almost overwhelming. Here, in the finest, most moving film the Merchant-Ivory team has ever made, Thompson shows a new fleetness and wit along with the genuine gravity that eluded her in *Dead Again*. It's a breakthrough performance—and Thompson knows it. "I'm ever so proud, really," she admits. "It's nice to watch yourself and think, Oh, God, I may have improved a bit. It makes you feel as though you may actually be in the right job."

—STEPHEN SCHIFF

Photograph by SNOWDON

HAIR BY SAM McKNIGHT. MAKEUP BY LESLEY CHILKES

EMMA THOMPSON

The sheer elegance she brings to the role is almost overwhelming.

HOW THEY BROKE THE BANK

Cracking the mysterious cast of characters and transactions behind the B.C.C.I. scandal presented an irresistible challenge to esteemed Manhattan D.A. Robert Morgenthau—and possibly the crowning achievement of a long career. But the D.A.'s top investigators found themselves chasing after some surprising pieces of the puzzle, including a titan of the Democratic Party.

MARIE BRENNER reports

From the beginning, the vast and complex case against B.C.C.I. has been one of warring truths and questions which doubled back on other questions, a $10 billion morass of international payola and fraud, byzantine characters and faraway places, dizzying shell games involving dummy bank accounts, forgeries, and alleged conspiracies to hide billions of dollars of international drug money. With the exception of NBC News, the networks have not lavished attention on the B.C.C.I. scandal; it has appeared to be a murky foreign thicket which defies sound bites, a quagmire with few American victims. "Who cares about these Arabs?" one

In the D.A.'s office, *clockwise from far left*: Veronica MacDevitt, Andrew Finan, Marc Scholl, Nikki Kowalski, Alan Michaels, Richard Preiss, Michael Cherkasky, Robert Morgenthau, and John Moscow.

Photographs by HARRY BENSON

"B.C.C.I. serviced the financial needs of an industry

network news producer told his reporter assigned to the case, although prosecutors believe tens of millions of dollars of bribes swept through Washington.

At times at recent press conferences in the office of the Manhattan district attorney, Robert Morgenthau, it was impossible not to be reminded of the atmosphere of the Watergate years. Reporters talked of "destruction of documents" and vast conspiracies, "White House scenarios" and "secret C.I.A. agendas." Journalists hovered around Morgenthau, who is canny about placing stories and beloved by the press. Now, with his relentless pursuit of "the Bank of Crooks and Criminals," he had become an international hero and heir to the tradition of Archibald Cox.

Morgenthau's office was bombarded by reporters' questions: Were Robert Altman and Clark Clifford, the two Washington superlawyers caught up in the B.C.C.I. scandal, trying to thwart the D.A.'s investigation? How was the Bahrain oil concession of George Bush Jr.'s Harken Energy connected to B.C.C.I.? Would Orrin Hatch's next Senate campaign be affected by his public defense of the bank's principals? What had B.C.C.I. accomplished by giving $8.8 million to Jimmy Carter's charitable foundation? Why would B.C.C.I. officials have sought to hire Henry Kissinger's consulting firm? Had former C.I.A. chief William Casey protected the criminal owners of the bank? Had George Bush's former chief of staff, John Sununu, spun the Justice Department and impeded Massachusetts senator John Kerry's hearings on the case? Why had Sununu's former aide Ed Rogers accepted a $600,000 fee from Kamal Adham, a front man for Agha Hasan Abedi, the fugitive Pakistani who was the criminal promoter of a drug lords' bank?

There are no hard, fast answers to many of the questions. Truth and facts are mired in what will be years of legal maneuvers. There is talk that the growing revelations of the B.C.C.I. conspiracies, once thought to be "a Democratic problem," as Bert Lance described it to me, could engulf George Bush's White House and influence November's presidential election. The finest legal minds in America, such as Robert Fiske, the former U.S. attorney from the Southern District, have been brought in to represent Clark Clifford and Robert Altman, who, as targets of Robert Morgenthau's investigation, face possible indictment.

Whatever the legalities and the loopholes of "the crime of the century," as the case is now called in the office of the Manhattan D.A., it is clear, as in the Watergate years, that somehow men of power and reputation have forgotten the difference between right and wrong. Studying the B.C.C.I. case, cynical prosecutors have despaired about the future of the country. "When the pattern of bribery is so established and so subtle that it cannot be proved in a court of law, then it is almost impossible for a democracy to function," Morgenthau's deputy chief of investigations, John Moscow, told me.

"To put this in the largest possible context, B.C.C.I. is a case study in the power of drug and oil money," says Morgenthau. "It all comes together in this bank. The amount of bribery is almost unprecedented."

At the very center of the American facet of the B.C.C.I. drama is Clark Clifford, for years an icon of the Democratic Party, who as a Washington lawyer and counsel to the bank made millions of dollars in fees and set up the legal machinery for B.C.C.I. to expand operations in this country. "I would not have touched [B.C.C.I. business] with a hundred-foot pole if I knew that there was any fraud or misrepresentation connected with it," he told Mike Wallace on *60 Minutes*.

For friends of Clifford and Robert Altman, it was at first fashionable to say that Morgenthau should be worrying about the avalanche of murders and rapes in New York City, not spending his time trying to extradite con men from the Third World. Famous New Yorkers sent him angry letters vouching for Clifford's integrity. He was approached at his Amherst College reunion by a close friend: "Why are you going after Clark Clifford? You know he's done so much for the Democratic Party!" Pamela Harriman, who had been aided by Clifford in her rise in Democratic Party politics, defended him vigorously at dinner parties in New York and Georgetown. "Clark is a man of impeccable reputation and he will be exonerated," she reportedly said.

At a time in their lives when Clark Clifford and Robert Morgenthau should be picking up awards and tributes, the B.C.C.I. scandal has brought these two pillars of the Democratic Party into a direct confrontation with each other. It is as if fate has suggested a surprising finale: At eighty-five years of age, the hallowed Clifford suddenly finds himself facing an ignominious end, his memoirs discredited, his law firm disbanded, and his word doubted even if he is never charged with any crime. At seventy-two, Morgenthau, who for years lost jurisdiction and headlines to publicity-savvy former U.S. attorney Rudolph Giuliani, has obtained a last, best chance to reclaim the spotlight *and* score a searing moral victory for the legal system that he has upheld all these years.

Morgenthau is one of the great men of New York, the boss of an often overwhelmed law-enforcement system with 570 assistant D.A.'s prosecuting up to 30,000 drug cases a year and countless murders and rapes. He has often felt powerless in the face of street crime brought on by drugs. He knows that he could arrest dealers "until the cows come home," but none of it will do any good unless he gets the money-launderers who help keep the suppliers in business.

Morgenthau often hides his passions and his outrage at white-collar crime behind the mask of legal probity. He has a long face with a very high forehead, as if drawn by Modigliani, startling pale eyes, and the muted courtesy and perfect manners of his aristocratic German-Jewish forebears. His father, Henry Morgenthau Jr., was Roosevelt's secretary of the Treasury; his grandfather was an ambassador to Turkey under Woodrow Wilson. Men of power have little charm for Robert Morgenthau. As a child, he used to sit on F.D.R.'s lap when Roosevelt visited the Morgenthaus' Hudson Valley apple farm. When Robert Morgenthau was appointed United States attorney for the Southern District, he

hat was destroying a generation of American kids."

called his father to tell him the news. "Don't forget the Park Avenue crooks," Henry Morgenthau told his son. "They are the worst." For the D.A. and his prosecutors, the B.C.C.I. case is where all their passions and experience come together; it is a chance to prosecute "the Park Avenue crooks" and to illuminate the obscene misuse of the American banking system. It is a case of massive fraud and government influence peddling, with departments of law enforcement around the world allegedly jousting with one another as if scripted by Costa-Gavras.

In the same way that Robert Morgenthau hardly leaves a fingerprint as he exerts influence in New York, so too has Clark Clifford always operated swiftly and softly in the Washington world of favors and accommodation. It seems impossible to believe, yet they have never actually met, although both were close to John and Robert Kennedy. Morgenthau had run John Kennedy's presidential campaign in the Bronx and had, in turn, been appointed U.S. attorney when Kennedy took office. In Washington, Clifford had been placed in charge of Kennedy's transition team. He was the family's personal lawyer, trusted to do "the cleanup work," as the author Richard Reeves phrased it.

Morgenthau at home with his wife, the reporter turned novelist Lucinda Franks.

Morgenthau and Clifford have sought different paths to power. Clifford is a legendary smoothy who parlayed his stint in the Truman White House into a hugely lucrative career as Washington's premier fixer and inside man. Morgenthau is, in his own circles, equally well connected. He is a judicial crusader who has spun plenty of his own webs. A good number of New York's federal and state judges were trained originally as Morgenthau prosecutors; it is said, perhaps apocryphally, that when judges annoy Morgenthau a few well-placed phone calls dispatch them to distant benches. He has loyalties everywhere, as many a political opponent has learned.

Morgenthau almost died during W.W. II when his boat was torpedoed; he threw his life jacket to another man and floated for hours in the water until he was rescued. He is a man with private areas of extreme passion and generosity. It is a given in the office that "the boss" will guarantee a job to any member of the Kennedy clan or anyone whose relatives suffered in the Holocaust. Morgenthau's influence can be felt all through the city and state—when he is irritated, he calls the governor or the mayor or picks up the phone and speaks directly to friends at *The New York Times*. He is part of the liberal world of New York where hardball is played with the right telephone call to the proper ancient friend.

The Clark Clifford of his recent autobiography, *Counsel to the President,* is a dedicated public servant who admirably served Truman by pushing through the recognition of the state of Israel. He writes extensively of his behind-the-scenes efforts to end the Vietnam War as secretary of defense during the Johnson presidency, while hardly touching upon his lobbying activities, which began early in his Washington career.

Clifford radiates superiority. He has thick, wavy silver hair and massive eyebrows. His voice is authoritative, and so comforting it surrounds a listener like an eiderdown. He often arrives late to courtrooms and is inevitably the last man to speak at a meeting. He has shunned certain elite organizations, like the Council on Foreign Relations, as if he were a man apart. Several years ago he strolled into the Criminal Division of the Justice Department. "Where's your ID?" a guard demanded. "What is an ID?" Clifford reportedly asked.

A master of gesture and anecdote, he regales hostesses at dinner parties with stories of world leaders and knows how to make the right self-deprecating remark at the proper moment, as if he had analyzed the powerful effect personal charm could have on history. He often holds his hands with his fingers arched, a pose that his friends call "the Clifford steeple." When he stood with his client Bert Lance, who would later be indicted and acquitted on bank-fraud charges, one newspaper reporter observed that "Lance was accompanied by God."

After he testified before the Senate's hearings on B.C.C.I. in October, Clifford shook hands with all the aides and

"I have been asking myself, Where did I go wrong?

thanked them for their efforts, a theatrical gesture which seemed intended to display a preternatural calm. "It was like seeing a mask behind a mask," one staff member told me. "Clifford's public image was so overly cultivated that he seemed impervious to reality."

Last December, B.C.C.I. pleaded guilty to numerous charges of racketeering, fraud, and larceny. As part of the deal, the bank agreed to forfeit all of its known American assets—$550 million—and pay a $10 million fine to New York State. "This is a great coup!" Morgenthau told me. "It will help us with subsequent indictments. It says to the world that [B.C.C.I.] has committed a crime and that we [in New York] have jurisdiction."

The Manhattan D.A. is weighing whether to charge Clark Clifford and Robert Altman with fraud and false-statement crimes involving B.C.C.I.'s clandestine ownership of an American bank. At the same time that Clifford and Altman were B.C.C.I.'s attorneys, they assisted a group of Arabs in a hostile takeover of a bank called Financial General, which they would transform into First American, the largest bank in Washington. It is now known that B.C.C.I. used Clifford and Altman to secretly acquire the bank. At stake in the investigation is whether Clifford and Altman served as front men for B.C.C.I., engineering a series of stock transactions without full disclosure to the Federal Reserve and to the superintendent of banks in New York. Clifford and Altman have steadfastly denied that they had any knowledge of B.C.C.I.'s agenda or its ownership of First American.

"The B.C.C.I. case raises questions about whether our system can be penetrated by anyone with enough money," Jonathan Winer, counsel to Senator John Kerry, told me. "Think about organized crime. Suppose it was Don Corleone and he says, 'I want people helping me out who are close to many presidents of the United States. I want former regulators and prosecutors.' [Don Corleone] couldn't get those people; he could only get Mob lawyers. B.C.C.I. didn't get Mob lawyers—it got the best and the brightest."

"There are still a lot of things we don't know," Morgenthau told me. "We don't know how the B.C.C.I.–First American relationship got started. We don't know how it got past the Federal Reserve.... What we are trying to nail down now is the ownership in First American and the possibility that there were false statements made by Clifford and Altman and the relationship between the Arab owners and the banks."

On the surface, the B.C.C.I. case seems to revolve around the complex criminal ambitions of Agha Hasan Abedi, who was determined to create the most powerful bank in the world. Abedi was a New Age charlatan with a charismatic personality. He ran seminars on Eastern mysticism for his employees and dispensed epigrams such as "Western banks concentrate on the visible, whereas we stress the invisible." He instructed his subordinates to do anything to please a client of the bank. Bank employees organized hunts for the great houbara bird of Pakistan and delivered prostitutes from the red-light district of Lahore. An American-based B.C.C.I. executive allegedly used to deliver ten-year-old girls to one member of a royal family in the Gulf.

Abedi roamed the globe meeting with world leaders. He reportedly donated £3 million to a foundation favored by the former British prime minister James Callaghan; it was Lord Callaghan who defended B.C.C.I. publicly and was said to have eased the way for Abedi to gain British citizenship. By 1975, B.C.C.I. had become the largest foreign bank in the United Kingdom.

In 1977, Abedi's global ambitions led him to America and Bert Lance, who had just been forced to resign in a financial scandal as President Carter's budget director. Lance was desperate for money and was looking to sell his controlling share in the National Bank of Georgia. Abedi helped Lance find a buyer, B.C.C.I. front man Ghaith Pharaon, and in 1982, Lance introduced Abedi to Carter. "Mr. Abedi and President Carter discovered they shared a mutual interest in the guinea worm and other Third World health problems," Bert Lance told me. Carter, as is now well known, toured the world in the B.C.C.I. jet and accepted an $8.8 million donation for his Global 2000 Foundation and the Carter Presidential Center. B.C.C.I. went on to open a number of American branches in the 1980s. Its guest logs were filled with the names of those it was hoping to enchant; visitors to the Miami B.C.C.I. office alone included President Bush's son Jeb, former Florida governor Reubin Askew, and Senator Bob Graham of Florida.

It is the dream of prosecutors that an informant will walk into the office with a perfect case guaranteed to ride the nightly news, but Robert Morgenthau had no idea in April of 1989 that Jack Blum, a plumpish, balding, middle-aged government investigator, was presenting him with the case that would bring them both great acclaim. Blum, then special counsel to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, knew he was onto a potentially massive case of money-laundering and bank fraud.

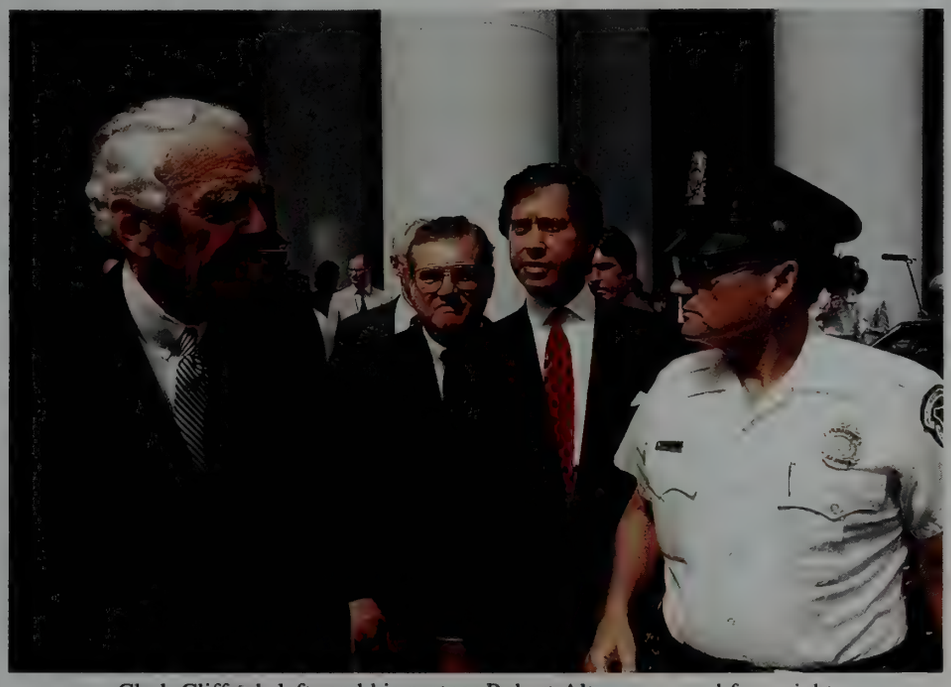
As an idealistic kid out of law school, Blum had nearly gone to work in the Manhattan Criminal Court. The D.A.'s office hadn't changed—it was still grimy and threadbare; street pimps, robbers, and drug dealers sauntered down the corridors, lost in the Manhattan court system. The smell of the D.A.'s office was overpowering, perfumed with the ineffable odor of "urine on the radiators," just as Blum remembered it.

Washington is filled with career legal investigators who do the dog work for ambitious senators and congressmen looking for scams and headlines, but Jack Blum is unusual. He is an intellectual, a voracious reader who often speaks of "the life of the mind." As a student at Columbia Law School, he was befriended by Hannah Arendt; he knows, as Arendt believed, that great evil often emerges gradually, through passivity and a series of ever increasing compromises. He is consumed with exposing government corruption.

What mistake did I make?" Clifford reportedly said.

For two years, Blum had been interviewing informants and witnesses for Senator John Kerry's Subcommittee on Terrorism, Narcotics, and International Operations. He was eager to learn how foreign policy affected America's handling of the drug problem. Almost by accident, he had run across the Bank of Credit and Commerce.

Blum was coming to see the redoubtable Manhattan district attorney very much as a last resort. It baffled him that the Justice Department appeared to have little enthusiasm for going after his quarry. B.C.C.I. was registered in Luxembourg and the Cayman Islands—havens of financial corruption, with their elastic rules and scant regulations—and based in London; it was known to have done business with Arab terrorists (including, it would later emerge, Abu Nidal), as well as the Colombian drug trade; and it owned a large Colombian bank tied to the Medellín cartel. Just as puzzling to Blum was how a man like Clark Clifford, who had long prided himself on his access to presidents, could be representing B.C.C.I.



Clark Clifford, left, and his partner Robert Altman, second from right, on Capitol Hill after testifying before the House Banking Committee last September.

For the Senate hearings, Blum had reeled in some prime beauties as witnesses and informants, including two highly placed B.C.C.I. executives. They spoke of the many international players involved in B.C.C.I.'s money-laundering. Blum had even hauled in Manuel Noriega's own counsel general, based in New York. One day Noriega's man sat down and drew Blum an elaborate chart entitled "Noriega's Criminal Empire." There on the diagram was the bull's-eye—B.C.C.I., Noriega's bank of choice.

"These were people in businesses that are as ugly as it gets," says Blum of Abedi and his cohorts. "It was straightout criminality in terms of laundering drug money, hiding drug assets. It was the white-collar side of the drug trade. What we were looking at in B.C.C.I. was an organization that serviced the financial needs of an industry that was destroying a generation of American kids."

At the street level, B.C.C.I.'s managers had worked out an arrangement with a group of drug dealers. Cocaine brought into the United States was sold; the cash was deposited in B.C.C.I. accounts in low-denomination money orders and C.D.'s to evade tracing. Withdrawals from these accounts were then wired offshore, and B.C.C.I. earned a percentage of the take for laundering the money. According to testimony, one trafficker alone laundered $200 million a month, mostly through the U.S. branches of B.C.C.I. In one small example, two plastic bags that contained at least $145,000 in $1,000 money orders later came to the attention of investigators from the Federal Reserve. "I wondered when you were going to notice this," a B.C.C.I. bank teller told the Feds.

As if it were the rum circuit of Colonial times, B.C.C.I. was also masterful at exporting cash. "Satchels of drug money were put on certain airlines associated with Arab interests, and the cash would then be deposited in Saudi Arabia," one prosecutor told me. "In Saudi Arabia, the bank would exchange the cash for gold. The gold would then be moved by ship to India, where there is tremendous jewelry manufacturing. The gold would be sold and that cash would go into B.C.C.I. operations there."

Blum told Morgenthau that he had been helping the U.S. Customs Service and the Drug Enforcement Administration tape informants they had picked up in Florida. The Customs Service was often looked down upon by prosecutors as the kindergarten of law enforcement, but in Tampa the agents were operating magnificently. In fact it was a customs agent, Robert Mazur, who produced the first proof of B.C.C.I.'s money-laundering, as part of a two-year undercover operation called C-Chase.

Blum had what every case needed for a successful prosecution: the warm bodies, the actual B.C.C.I. witnesses, who were willing to talk to the Tampa federal prosecutors.

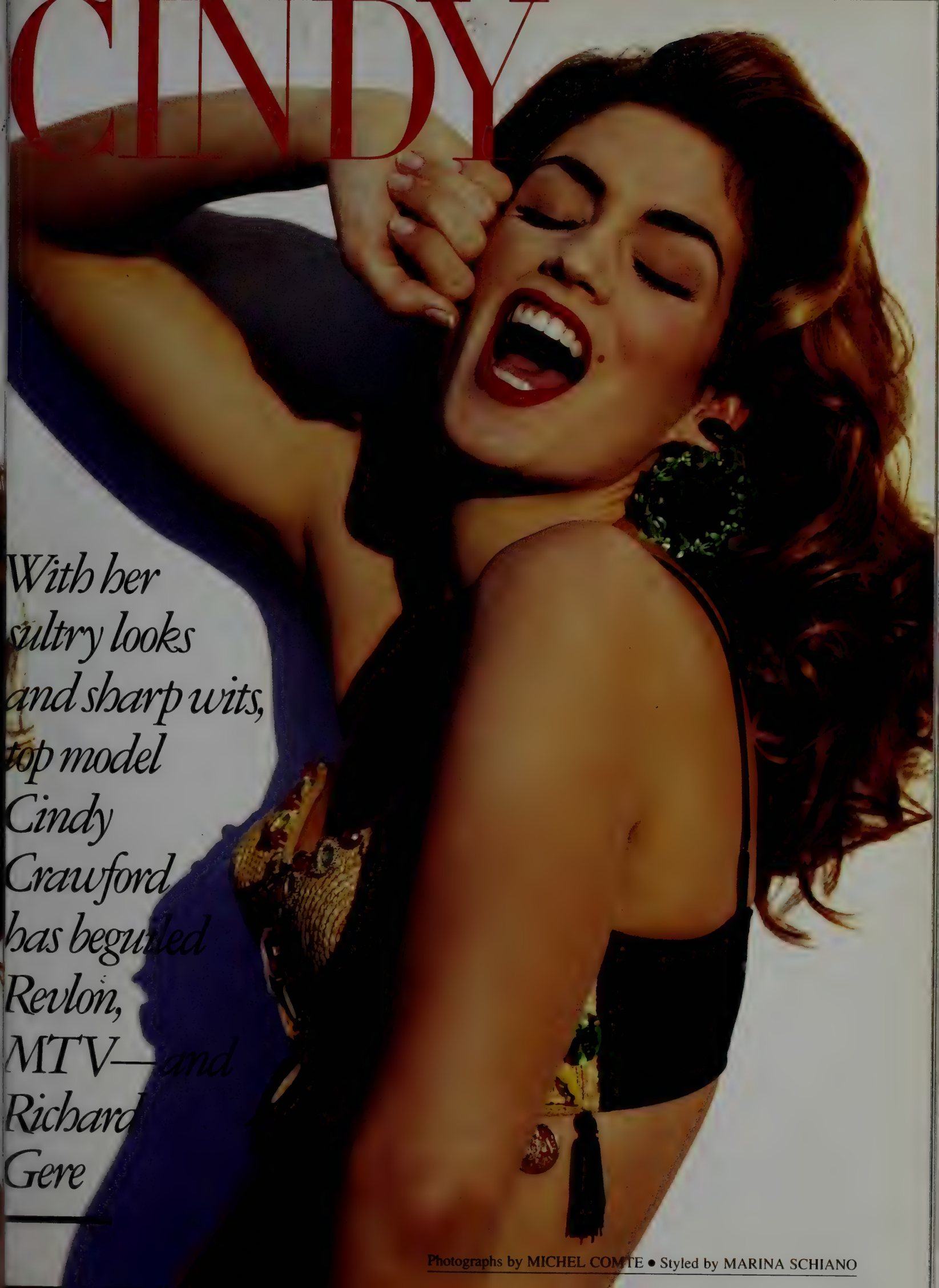
"I said to the prosecutors, 'Guys, here is something important. Listen, [the witnesses] will help you.' " Blum was offering a case that could make a young prosecutor's entire career. He was astonished by their tepid reaction: the local federal prosecutors indicted B.C.C.I. on money-laundering charges, then made a deal for a guilty plea contingent upon no further corporate prosecutions in Tampa.

The more Blum prodded, the less anyone in the Tampa U.S. Attorney's Office seemed interested in pursuing other charges against the bank. He could not understand why Tampa was not picking up the ball. (Tampa prosecutors contend that Blum's witnesses were, in *(Continued on page 260)*

ORIGINAL

HAIR BY [illegible] AT [illegible] BY CAROL SHAW. BOTH FOR CLOUTIER; BRA BY DOLCE & GABBANA; EARRINGS BY ERIC BEAMON AT SHOWROOM SEVEN

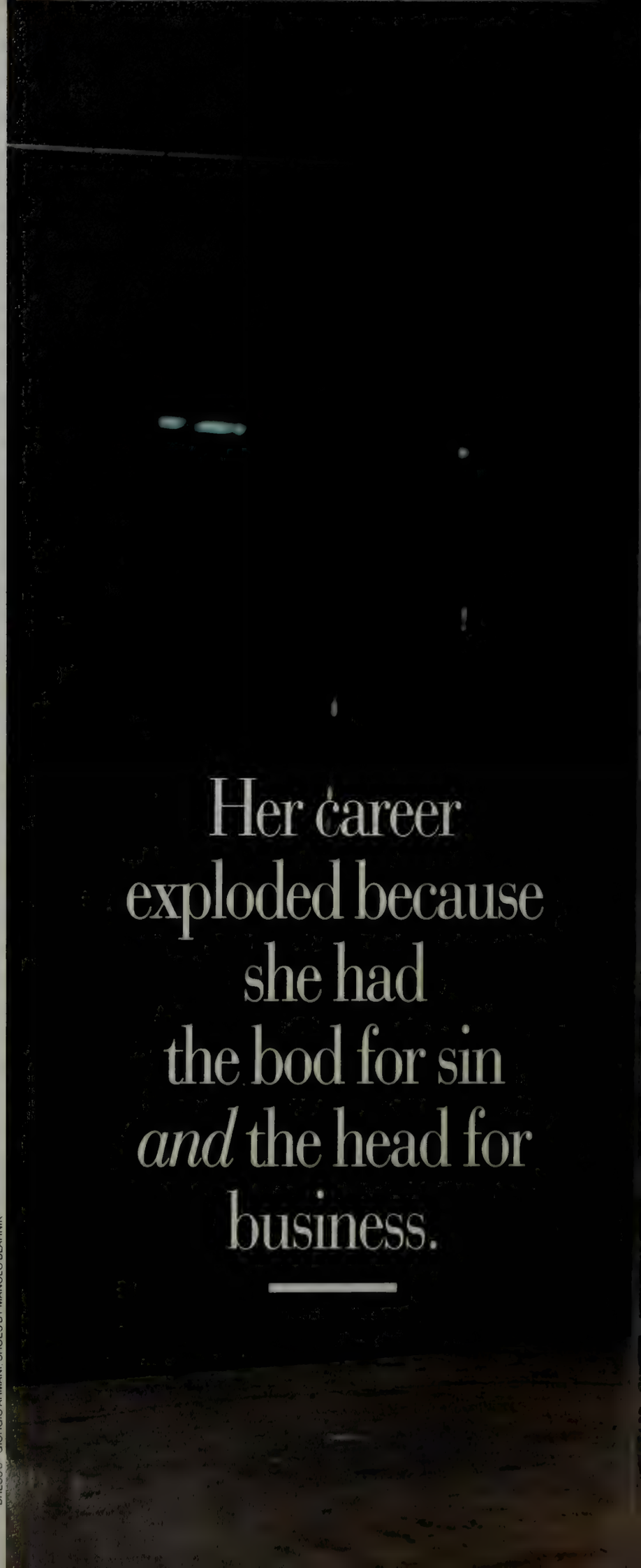
CINDY



With her sultry looks and sharp wits, top model Cindy Crawford has beguiled Revlon, MTV—and Richard Gere

Photographs by MICHEL COMTE • Styled by MARINA SCHIANO

A wall in the office of the producer of MTV's *House of Style*—like so many walls all over America—is hung with a luscious picture of ultra-model Cindy Crawford. It is inscribed, "Thanks for letting me talk." Not many models, male or female, get that chance, and Crawford has run with it. The twenty-six-year-old's career exploded from photographer Victor Skrebneski's Chicago studio to the world's fashion pages, runways, and calendars because she had the bod for sin *and* the head for business. From the start, the former Northwestern undergrad made smart career moves, turning an unhappy experience as a *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit model into a featured cover role in a swimsuit issue of *Sport* magazine, using erotic layouts in *Playboy* and *GQ* to spread her name, and wisely bowing out of her planned movie debut in *Wild Orchid*. For the past three years, her Revlon deal has reportedly made her $1.8 million for about nine weeks' work, and she recently signed a lucrative extension. Her marriage to forty-two-year-old Richard Gere (they met at a Herb Ritts barbecue) is said to have melted some of her frosty proficiency, and her MTV gig has shown how funny and natural she can be with just a microphone, a body dress, and a $400 hairdo. On her six-times-a-year show (the next one airs late this month) and sporadic special appearances, she has played dress-up at the Plaza with Tracey Ullman, teased Cher's hair color du jour, and told teen rap stud Marky Mark that his bod "looked pretty amazing" when he disrobed during a performance. "Thanks," Marky replied, "but it didn't look any more hittin' than *yours*." —STEPHEN FRIED



DRESS BY GIORGIO ARMANI; SHOES BY MANOLO BLAHNIK

HITLER'S ANGEL

DOOMED

FEMME FATALE
Geli Raubal (*far left*) was twenty-three when she was found shot to death in the sumptuous second-floor apartment (*bottom center*) owned by her Uncle Adolf. For the previous five years, she had been the Nazi leader's "great love," whom he squired around to cafés and cinemas and spent idyllic afternoons with at his Berchtesgaden mountain retreat.

he unresolved and hastily
overed-up death in 1931 of
eli Raubal, Hitler's half-niece and
mantic obsession, has long been
legated to the murky footnotes of the
ührer's early career in the demimonde
f Munich. As calls for a new
nvestigation stir up another Austrian crisis
f conscience, RON ROSENBAUM reports
n a sixty-year-old mystery

Vienna.

She was beautiful, they said, but there was something unusual about her beauty, something peculiar—even frightening. Consider the testimony of Frau Braun, now eighty-six (and no relation to Eva), one of the few people left alive who knew Geli Raubal before she became Hitler's consort. Knew her as a teenager in Vienna in the twenties, when Hitler would come to call incognito in his black Mercedes.

Indeed, until recently, Frau Braun was living in the very same Vienna apartment building that was once Geli's refuge, the one she apparently was seeking to flee to on September 18, 1931—the day before she was found dead in her bedroom in Hitler's Munich apartment with a bullet through her chest and Hitler's gun by her side.

I was led to Frau Braun by Hans Horváth, the obsessed amateur historian whose current petition to exhume and examine Geli's long-dead body has stirred up controversy—and resistance from the Vienna city government. Resistance that is "a scandal," says a professor supporting Horváth. A scandal resulting from a Waldheim-era desire to keep not just Geli buried but memories of onetime Vienna citizen Adolf Hitler interred as well.

"A mysterious darkness" surrounds the death of this "unusual beauty," the *Fränkische Tagespost* reported forty-eight hours after her body was discovered. Sixty years later, when I traveled to Vienna and Munich to investigate the controversy, that darkness has yet to be dispelled. It still obscures the answers to such basic questions as whether Geli's death was suicide or murder. Who fired Hitler's gun that night?

Frau Braun's recollection is a gleam in that darkness, eyewitness testimony to the peculiar kind of power Geli had even as a young teenage girl.

I'd been reading accounts of Geli's beauty, the spell she cast over Hitler and his circle. I'd seen the blurry photographs of her. Some of them captured a hint of her haunting appeal, some did not.

Frau Braun, however, saw it face-to-face. "I was walking down the street and I heard her singing," Frau Braun tells me one winter afternoon in the comfort of her dignified pension in a senior citizens' residence, a place she moved into after living sixty years in the apartment building Geli grew up in.

As she approached the girl singing in the street, "I saw her and I just stopped dead. She was just so tall and beautiful that I said nothing. And she saw me standing there and said, 'Are you frightened of me?' And I said, 'No, I was just admiring you . . .' "

Frau Braun offers me another Mozart chocolate ball and shakes her head. "She was just so tall and beautiful. I'd never seen anyone like that."

MYSTERIOUS FASCINATION

Hitler, Goebbels, and Geli at a dinner party: one observer says Geli "never gave any impression of reciprocating Hitler's twisted tendernesses."

Are You Frightened of Me?

Geli, short for Angela: Hitler's half-niece, love object, angel. Although the precise physical nature of that "love" has been the subject of heated debate among historians for more than half a century, there is little doubt she was, as William Shirer puts it, "the only truly deep love affair of his life." Joachim Fest, the respected German biographer of Hitler, calls Geli "his great love, a tabooed love of Tristan moods and tragic sentimentality." His great love—and perhaps his first victim.

Who was Geli? While many testify to the peculiar power of her beauty—she was "an enchantress," said Hitler's photographer; "a princess, people on the street would turn around" to stare at her, according to Emil Maurice, Hitler's chauffeur—the question of her character is a matter of dispute. Was she the perfect image of Aryan maidenhood, as Hitler exalted her? Or an "empty-headed little slut" manipulating her besotted uncle, as one resentful Hitler confidant depicts her?

"No other woman linked to Hitler has exerted the kind of fascination for succeeding generations" that Geli has, *Der Spiegel* said recently. "Geli's sudden and apparently inexplicable death has challenged the imagination of contemporaries and later historians," writes Robert Waite in *The Psychopathic God: Adolf Hitler*.

Part of the continuing fascination with Geli, this enigmatic femme fatale, is that she had such a pronounced impact on Hitler—and that an examination of their doomed affair may be a window into the "mysterious darkness" of Hitler's psyche. "With the single exception of his mother's death," Waite believes, "no other event in his personal life had hit him so hard." Waite cites a comment Hermann Göring made at the Nuremberg trials: "Geli's death had such a devastating effect on Hitler that it . . . changed his relationship to all other people."

Equally intriguing is the notion that a scandal surrounding her death in Hitler's apartment could have destroyed his political career before he came to power. In the fall of 1931, he was *Führer* of the resurgent National Socialist Party and was poised to launch his campaign for the presidency the following year, the one

that would bring him to the brink of power. (He became Reichschancellor, his first political office, in 1933.) The gunshot death of a twenty-three-year-old woman in an apartment she shared with him might have derailed his rise—had the potentially explosive scandal not been defused.

Are You Frightened of Me?

Certainly the moment the police arrived to find Geli Raubal's corpse with his 6.35-mm. Walther pistol by her side, Adolf Hitler had reason to be frightened. But from the time her body was discovered, heroic efforts were made at what we would now call "damage control." Or "cover-up."

Some of the damage control was so inept it damaged him further—as when Hitler's spin doctors at the party's press bureau put out the dubious story that Geli, a vibrant, confident young woman, killed herself because she was "nervous" about an upcoming music recital.

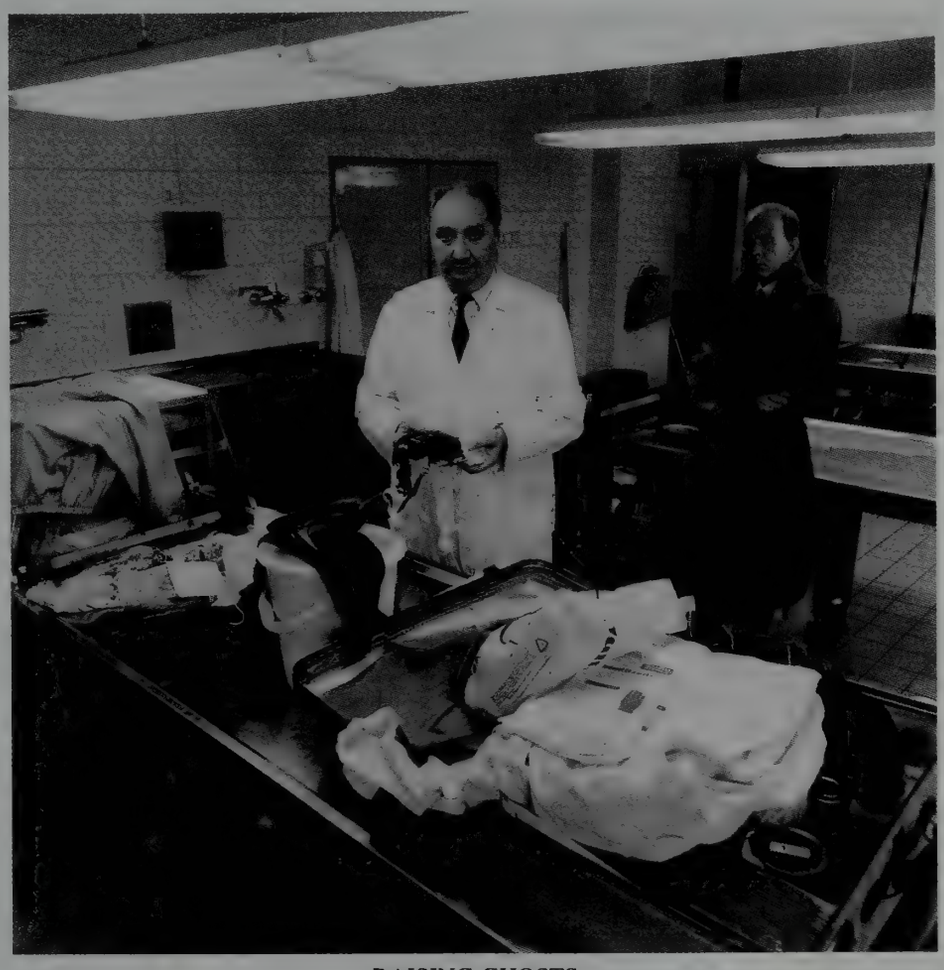
Some of the cover-up measures were, however, quite effective. Disappearing the body, for instance: party officials reportedly prevailed on sympathetic Bavarian minister of justice Franz Gürtner to quash an investigation by the public prosecutor's office; the body was given only a perfunctory post-mortem; the police issued a hasty pronouncement of suicide and permitted the body to be slipped down the back stairs and shipped off to Vienna for burial before the first reports of Geli's death—and the first questions about it—appeared in the Monday-morning papers.

Still, when the first scandalous report hit the streets in the *Münchner Post* (the city's chief anti-Nazi paper), Hitler himself had reason to fear his skyrocketing political career was in jeopardy:

A MYSTERIOUS AFFAIR: HITLER'S NIECE COMMITS SUICIDE

Regarding this mysterious affair, informed sources tell us that on Friday, September 18, Herr Hitler and his niece had yet another fierce quarrel. What was the cause? Geli, a vivacious twenty-three-year-old music student, wanted to go to Vienna, where she intended to become engaged. Hitler was decidedly against this. That is why they were quarreling repeatedly. After a fierce row, Hitler left his apartment on Prinzregentenplatz.

On Saturday, September 19, it became known that Geli had been found shot in the apartment with Hitler's gun in her hand. The nose bone of the deceased was shattered and the corpse evidenced other serious injuries. From a letter to a girlfriend living in Vienna, it appeared that Geli intended to go to Vienna. . . .



RAISING GHOSTS
Professor of forensic medicine Johann Szilvássy calls Vienna's resistance to exhuming the body of Geli Raubal "a scandal."

The men in the Brown House [party headquarters] then deliberated over what should be announced as the cause of the suicide. They agreed to give the reason for Geli's death as "unsatisfied artistic achievement." They also discussed the question of who, if something were to happen, should be Hitler's successor. Gregor Strasser was named. . . .

Perhaps the near future will bring light to this dark affair.

According to the memoirs of Hitler's lawyer Hans Frank, some newspapers went further. "There was even one version that he had shot the. . . girl himself," Frank reports. Such stories "not only appeared in scandal sheets, but daily in the leading papers with pens dipped in poison." Hitler "could not look at the papers anymore for fear the terrible smear campaign would kill him."

To escape scrutiny Hitler fled town for the isolated lakeside cottage of a party friend on the Tegernsee. Distraught, raving over this "terrible smear campaign" against him, he spoke wildly to Rudolf Hess, the companion by his side, about how it was all over—his political career, his very life. There was a moment, according to one story, when Hess had to leap and grab a pistol out of Hitler's hand before he could put it to his head.

Were Hitler's hysterics in the Tegernsee cottage grief—or guilt? Consider the surprising reply Hitler himself authored and dispatched to the *Münchner Post*, which was compelled by Weimar press law to print it in full. Consider it both for what it denies and for what it fails to deny:

1) It is not true [Hitler writes] that I was having fights again and again with my niece [Geli] Raubal and that we had a substantial quarrel on Friday or anytime before that. . . .

2) It is not true that I was decidedly against her going to Vienna. I was never against her planned trip to Vienna.

3) It is not true she was going to get engaged in Vienna or that I was against an engagement. It is true that my niece was tormented with the worry that she was not yet fit for her public appearance. She wanted to go to Vienna to have her voice checked once again by a voice teacher.

4) It is not true that I left my apartment on September 18 after a fierce row. There was no row, no excitement, when I left my apartment on that day.

A remarkably defensive statement for a political candidate to issue. And for a while, despite Hitler's nondenial denial

FLEISCHERE
Vienna "is frightened the new grave will become a

hrine for neo-Nazis," says Horváth. "A New Valhalla."

Photograph by HELMUT NEWTON

(nothing about the fractured nose, nothing about the Brown House spin doctors' being so concerned about the potential scandal that they had even selected Hitler's successor), the story began to grow. Other papers followed up, adding dark hints about the nature of the physical relationship between Hitler and his niece. The *Regensburger Echo* spoke cryptically about its going "beyond her strength" to endure. The periodical *Die Fanfare*, in an article headlined HITLER'S LOVER COMMITS SUICIDE: BACHELORS AND HOMOSEXUALS AS LEADERS OF THE PARTY, spoke of another woman, whose suicide attempt in 1928 followed a purported intimacy with Hitler. Hitler's private life with Geli, the paper said, "took on forms which obviously the young woman was unable to bear."

It seemed as if the scandal had reached critical mass. But then, suddenly, the stories stopped. With the body buried safely out of reach and Minister Gürtner in the party's pocket, there were no more facts left to dig up. With the *Münchner Post* silenced by the Nazis' threat of lawsuits, the scandal died down—although Shirer reports that "for years afterward in Munich there was murky gossip that Geli Raubal had been murdered." If Hitler did not escape unscathed, the sensation surrounding Geli's death did not slow down his inexorable rise.

What's ironic is that history and historians have let Hitler off so easily on the Geli case. Here's a man who would go on to murder millions, who made the Big Lie his essential mode of operation. But a young woman is found shot with his gun a few steps away from his bedroom, and Hitler gets the presumption of innocence because he and his friends say he wasn't there at the time? It's useful in this connection to recall the post-Holocaust commandment enunciated by Emil Fackenheim, one of the most respected contemporary Jewish philosophers: *Thou shalt not give Hitler any posthumous victories*. Why give him a posthumous exoneration for *any* death without doing everything possible to hold him accountable?

Perhaps it might be argued that a single death is meaningless with so many millions to come. But this was no meaningless death. Fritz Gerlich understood that. Gerlich was the brave, doomed crusading journalist who wouldn't let the case die, who believed that Hitler murdered Geli—and that if the world knew the truth about this crime it might save itself from worse crimes to come. Who continued to pursue the story so courageously that it cost him his life. In March 1933, just as he was about to publish the results of his investigation in the opposition newspaper he edited, *Der Gerade Weg*, a squad of storm troopers broke into his newspaper office, beat him up, seized and burned his manuscripts, and dragged him off to prison, and then to Dachau, where he was executed in July of 1934, during the Night of the Long Knives. Extinguishing, so it seemed, the last faint hope the case of Geli Raubal would be reopened. Until now.

The cover-up: police permitted Geli's body to be slipped down the back stairs.

Are You Frightened of Me?

Vienna. The Hotel Sacher. The specter of Geli Raubal still has an eerie power to arouse fascination—and fear. Those arguing for the exhumation of her remains charge the city authorities with stalling for fear of raising unsavory ghosts.

The exhumation effort has the endorsement of an internationally respected professor at the University of Vienna's Institute for Forensic Medicine, Professor Johann Szilvássy. It was Szilvássy who told me that it was "a scandal" that the city of Vienna has delayed for five years now granting Hans Horváth's petition to exhume the body of Geli Raubal. Szilvássy has endorsed the legitimacy of Horváth's request, agreed to perform the examination, and believes that at the very least it could resolve such crucial questions as whether, in fact, as the *Münchner Post* first reported, Geli's nose was broken (suggesting a violent quarrel before her death). And whether she was pregnant at the time, which might be discerned if the pregnancy had gone more than three months (there are rumors that she was carrying either Hitler's child or the child of a Jewish music teacher—and some believe that a pregnancy announcement was the cause of her final, perhaps fatal quarrel with Hitler).

Professor Szilvássy told me he blames the "scandal" on the city's ruling Socialist Party, which, he says, is reluctant to raise the ghost of the past the way the Waldheim affair did, and remind people of Hitler's intimate ties to the town.

"But there is more to their fear than that," Horváth tells me this afternoon, sitting at his favorite table in the café of the Hotel Sacher. The dapper Horváth, a well-to-do furniture restorer and art appraiser—who has his own, controversial theory about a Geli Raubal murder plot—has been pursuing Geli's ghost for two decades with an obsessive passion that recalls the detective in *Laura*. Indeed, like the devotion of the homicide dick in that forties *noir* classic, who locks onto the unfathomable Laura after he falls in love with her portrait, Horváth's fervor has been inspired, at least in part, by the beauty embodied in a portrait of Geli—a nude painting of the young enchantress which Horváth claims was the work of his fellow devotee, Hitler himself.

Horváth is not a professional historian; he's more like an impassioned J.F.K.-assassination buff. But he's made up for his lack of credentials with a kind of relentlessness that had him plunging into dank, subterranean cemetery archives in search of any last trace of Geli's burial records. There, in those underground repositories, he made his most consequential—and controversial—breakthrough: his claim to have relocated Geli's grave, rescuing her remains from the limbo of the lost, and perhaps from ignominious disposal.

Geli's grave was once a grand thing. Hitler had paid for a spacious site facing the Central Cemetery's architectural

landmark, the Luegerkirche. But in the chaos of W.W. II Vienna, payment for the upkeep of the grave site ceased (a peculiarity of Viennese burial practices in the Central Cemetery is that grave leases must be renewed regularly). According to Horváth, the mercilessly efficient cemetery bureaucracy evicted Geli's body from her expensive site in 1946 and moved it to a vast paupers' field, where it was interred in a plain zinc coffin in a narrow underground slot. Although Geli's grave was originally marked with a wooden cross, the paupers' field is now denuded of any surface markings, and Geli's slot is traceable only by a reference number on an intricate grid in a schematic diagram Horváth discovered.

In fact, Geli's remains are scheduled to soon be erased from existence entirely: if the cemetery's proposed redesign is carried out, all the bodies in the unmarked graves will be dug up and shoveled into a mass burial pit to make room for a "cemetery of the future." So, Horváth maintains, it's now or never.

Horváth comes close to saying that the obliteration of Geli's grave is a conscious effort by the city of Vienna to bury all disturbing memories and ghosts of Hitler forever.

"Why would they be afraid of the exhumation?" I ask Horváth.

"It's not the exhumation they fear," he insists. "It's the reburial. Because after the exhumation and Professor Szilvássy's examination, she will be returned to earth in a grave site I have purchased for her, with a stone to mark her name. And the city is frightened that the new grave will become a shrine."

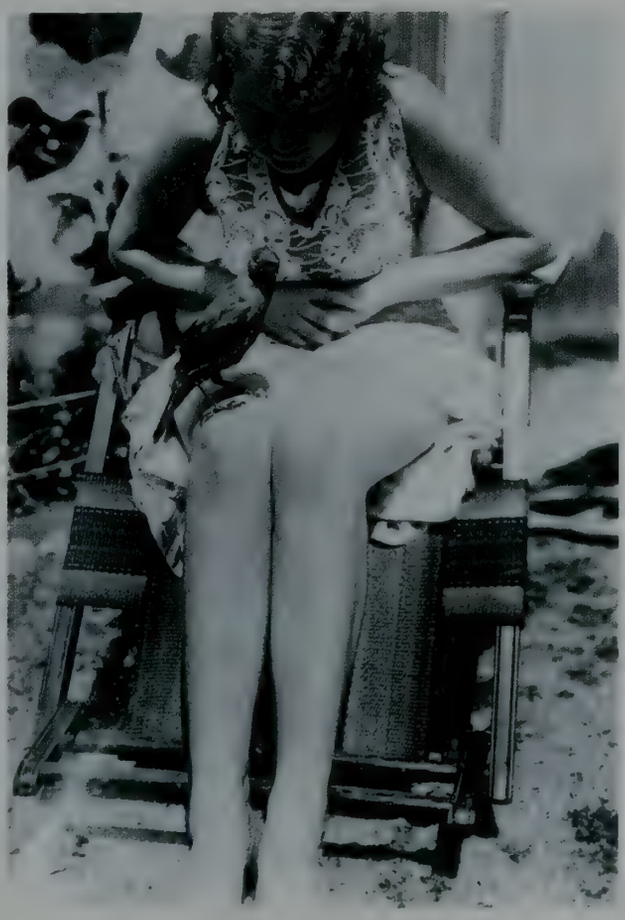
"A shrine?"

"Yes. A shrine for neo-Nazis. A New Valhalla."

Just who was Geli, this enigmatic charmer whose beauty had such a disproportionate effect on Hitler's psyche? As with many legendary femmes fatales, her historical reality has been blurred by mythic images. "There is no other story" in the realm of Hitler studies, said *Der Spiegel*, "where legend and fact are so fantastically interwoven."

Consider the rather basic question of hair color: was it blond or dark? One contemporary observer remarked with awe on Geli's "immense crown of blond hair." But Werner Maser, a sometimes reliable digger into Hitler's domestic life, insists she had "black hair and a distinctly Slavonic appearance."

Reports of her character are similarly divided between golden and darker hues. Some observers recall her reverently as "a deeply religious person who attended Mass regularly," "a princess."



GILDED CAGE
The price Geli paid was virtual confinement within the stony fortress she shared with her "Uncle Alfie."

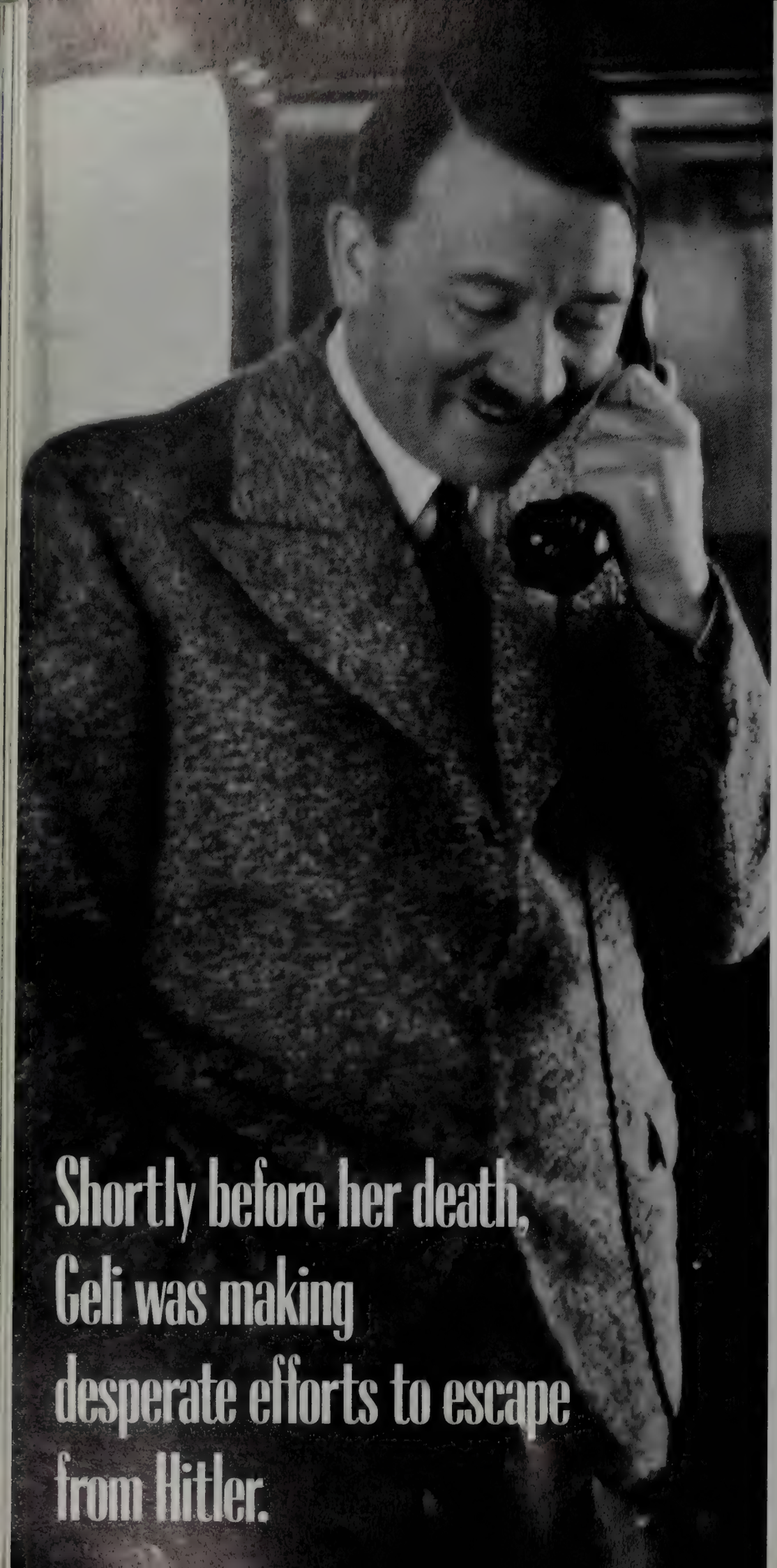
The Golden Girl school sums her up as "the personification of perfect young womanhood...deeply revered, indeed worshiped, by her uncle [Hitler]. He watched and gloated over her like some servant with a rare and lovely bloom."

Others saw her as quite another kind of bloom. Ernst "Putzi" Hanfstaengl, for instance. The American-educated art-book publisher and confidant of Hitler in the early years (who later fled to the U.S. and became a consultant on Hitler to his Harvard Club friend F.D.R.) was one of the more cosmopolitan and sophisticated observers of the Caligula's court of bizarre characters gathered around Hitler in his lesser-known Munich period. For some reason Hanfstaengl, who often had his own agenda, took a violent dislike to Geli; he called her "an empty-headed little slut, with the coarse sort of bloom of a servant girl." He claims that, despite Hitler's "mooncalf" adolescent infatuation with her, she betrayed him with his chauffeur, and perhaps with a "Jewish art teacher from Linz." (Hitler reportedly fired the chauffeur, Emil Maurice, calling him a "skirt chaser" who ought to be shot "like a mad dog.") And, Hanfstaengl adds, while she was "perfectly content to preen herself in her fine clothes," Geli "certainly never gave any impression of reciprocating Hitler's twisted tendernesses."

Before we delve deeper into their physical relationship, it will be useful to explain their genealogical relationship. Geli's mother was Hitler's older half-sister, Angela, who married a man named Leo Raubal from Linz, the town in which Hitler grew up. In 1908, Angela gave birth to a girl, also named Angela, soon familiarly known as "Geli."

This would make Geli, in shorthand, Hitler's half-niece. Hitler himself was the product of a marriage between second cousins (or, according to some, between an uncle and a niece), a union that needed a papal dispensation to lift the customary church ban on such consanguineous marriages. Should Hitler have married Geli—as many, including her mother, speculated he would—it would have also required a papal dispensation to legitimate the marriage in the eyes of the church.

Around the time Geli was born, Hitler was living in Vienna, in a men's shelter. A disaffected would-be artist, bitter about the rejection of his application to the Academy of Fine Arts, he was scratching out a living selling postcards he painted of local landmarks. It wasn't until after the Great War, after Corporal Hitler returned to his adopted Munich and became, at thirty-three, leader of the National Socialist Party, that he got back in touch with Angela and Geli in Vienna. Geli was then about fourteen; her father had been dead since she was two; her mother worked as a housekeeper at a convent school; their



Shortly before her death, Geli was making desperate efforts to escape from Hitler.

life in a flat by the Westbanhof railway station was fairly plain and grim.

Suddenly, teenage Geli had an exciting gentleman caller, a celebrity, her "Uncle Alfie" (as he had her call him).

After Hitler's failed 1923 Beer Hall Putsch, after his trial and nine-month jail term (during which he wrote the first volume of *Mein Kampf*), after he returned to Munich and began plotting his political comeback, he summoned Angela Raubal and seventeen-year-old Geli to come to serve as his live-in housekeepers, first at his mountain retreat at Berchtesgaden.

By that time, in 1925, Geli had blossomed into something of a beauty. And Hitler soon began to take notice of Geli in a way that went far beyond the avuncular. One journalist, Konrad Heiden, described him squiring her around bucolic mountain villages, riding "through the countryside from time to time showing the blond child how 'Uncle Alf' could bewitch the masses."

But it soon became clear that it was Uncle Alf who was becoming "bewitched." He asked Geli and her mother to move to Munich. Set Geli up in an apartment building next to his and, leaving the housekeeping to Angela, paraded Geli around on his arm, escorted her to cafés and cinemas. Indeed, Hitler soon began to act like a Hearstian sugar daddy, paying for her lessons with the best voice teachers in Munich and Vienna, encouraging her to believe she could become a heroine of the Wagnerian operas he loved to distraction.

Soon others began to take note of his romantic fascination. According to Fest, a party leader from Württemberg named Munder complained that Hitler was "being excessively diverted by the company of his niece from his political duties." (Hitler later fired Munder.) Putzi Hanfstaengl recalls that Geli "had the effect of making him behave like a man in love.... He hovered at her elbow...in a very plausible imitation of adolescent infatuation." Hanfstaengl says he once observed Hitler and Geli at the opera, saw him "mooning at her," and then when he noticed Hanfstaengl observing him, Hitler quickly "switched his face to the Napoleonic look."

In 1929 something happened which changed the nature of their relationship. His political as well as his personal fortunes growing rapidly again, Hitler purchased a nine- *(Continued on page 238)*

FATAL DISTRACTION?
Hitler's infatuation with Geli took on forms, according to some, which she was "unable to bear." Horváth's girlfriend, Miriam Kornfeld, stands behind what Horváth claims is a painting of Geli by Hitler.

SPOTLIGHT

Moe Better Blues

Forget chandeliers, helicopters, and barricades. *Five Guys Named Moe*, Broadway's latest musical import from Britain, is actually about music; it's a giddy, feel-good celebration of Louis Jordan, the master jazzman of jive. If an American bandleader/singer/saxophonist sounds like an odd subject for an English show, *Five Guys* was created and directed by expat Yanks (Clarke Peters and Charles Augins, respectively), and it began in October 1990 at the ever funky Theatre Royal Stratford East, on London's theatrical "fringe." Its path from the East End to the Eugene O'Neill Theatre on Broadway is due to producer Cameron Mackintosh, who had decided by intermission one evening to take the show to Shaftesbury Avenue and beyond. "I was bowled over," recalls Mackintosh, who found himself chanting and congaing with the crowd at the first-act finale: "Push-ka-pi-shi-pie—eh-eh." The story involves a lovesick D.J. whose radio bursts into life with a rollicking quintet of Moes, but London audiences have been responding to the show's punchy exuberance, not its plot—and to such songs as "Dad Gum Your Hide Boy" and "Saturday Night Fish Fry." Is Mackintosh concerned that a New York public raised on spectacle may find *Five Guys* slight? "I think this is a Broadway show," he replies. And anyway, he says, "in the end, I never get hooked on scale; I do a show because I like it." —MATT WOLF

Photograph by RUEDI HOFMANN

FIVE MOES AND THEIR MUSE

The Broadway cast, from left: Glenn Turner, Kevin Ramsey, Milton Craig Nealy, Doug Eskew, Jerry Dixon (the lovesick guy they sing to), and Jeffrey Sams.

A giddy, feel-good celebration of the master jazzman of jive.

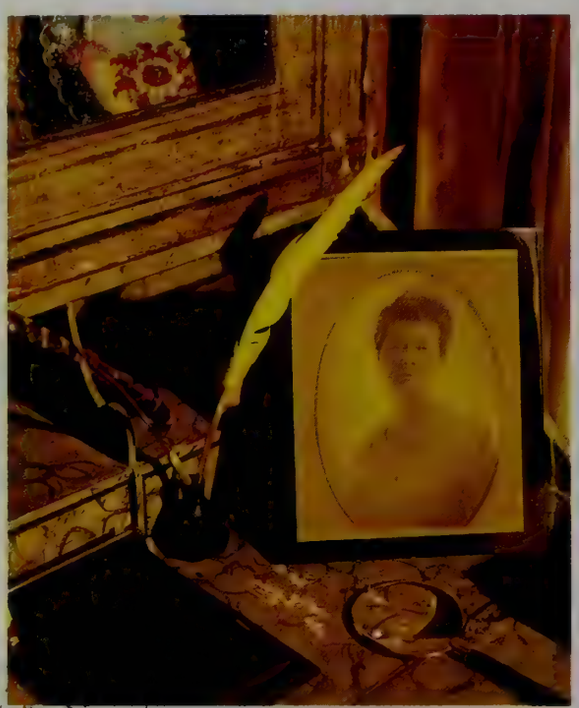
Paul Mellon in the library of his Washington house. He has been richer longer than any other living American.

More than just old money, Paul Mellon epitomizes the old-school style of impeccable taste and discretion. So why, after a long life quietly devoted to aesthetic and philanthropic pursuits, has he chosen to reveal his most private doubts and anxieties? MARTIN FILLER reports, on the publication of Mellon's frank memoirs, *Reflections in a Silver Spoon*

Photographs by BRUCE WEBER

A Cool Mellon

Paul Mellon, top row, second from right, at Clare College, Cambridge, circa 1931. Of his mother, Nora McMullen Mellon, below, *he says, "We were friends.... I would not call it love."*



Mellon takes a jump with the Piedmont Foxhounds, Virginia, March 1941. With Mary Conover Brown, right, *his first wife (sitting for Gerald Brockhurst, London, 1937), he discovered another abiding interest: psychiatry.*

"I've been through so many different kinds of life in my life," says Paul Mellon over one of his lethal gin-and-vodka martinis before lunch in his Washington, D.C., house, "that it's hard to make an amalgam of them." It seems an odd confession from a very collected, suave old gentleman in this ravishing setting: a sun-filled library superbly decorated by his wife, Bunny, and hung with great paintings by Degas, Vuillard, Bonnard, and Braque. Wearing a seventeen-year-old black pin-striped suit from H. Huntsman & Sons (where he has had his clothes made since 1928), Paul Mellon, honorary knight commander of the Order of the British Empire, exudes the confidence of a man truly to the manner born.

But quite a different image—one riddled with self-doubt, undercut by insecurity, and marked by a long quest for personal awareness—emerges from his surprising autobiography, *Reflections in a Silver Spoon: A Memoir,* written with John Baskett and published this month by William Morrow. In fact, the very appearance of this probing private history is an unexpected event, in that the eighty-four-year-old philanthropist, art collector, and horseman has heretofore struggled to stay out of the public eye. And no wonder: twice in his early life major scandals swirled around Paul Mellon's family, deepening his innate reticence and leaving him with a distaste for exposure of any sort.

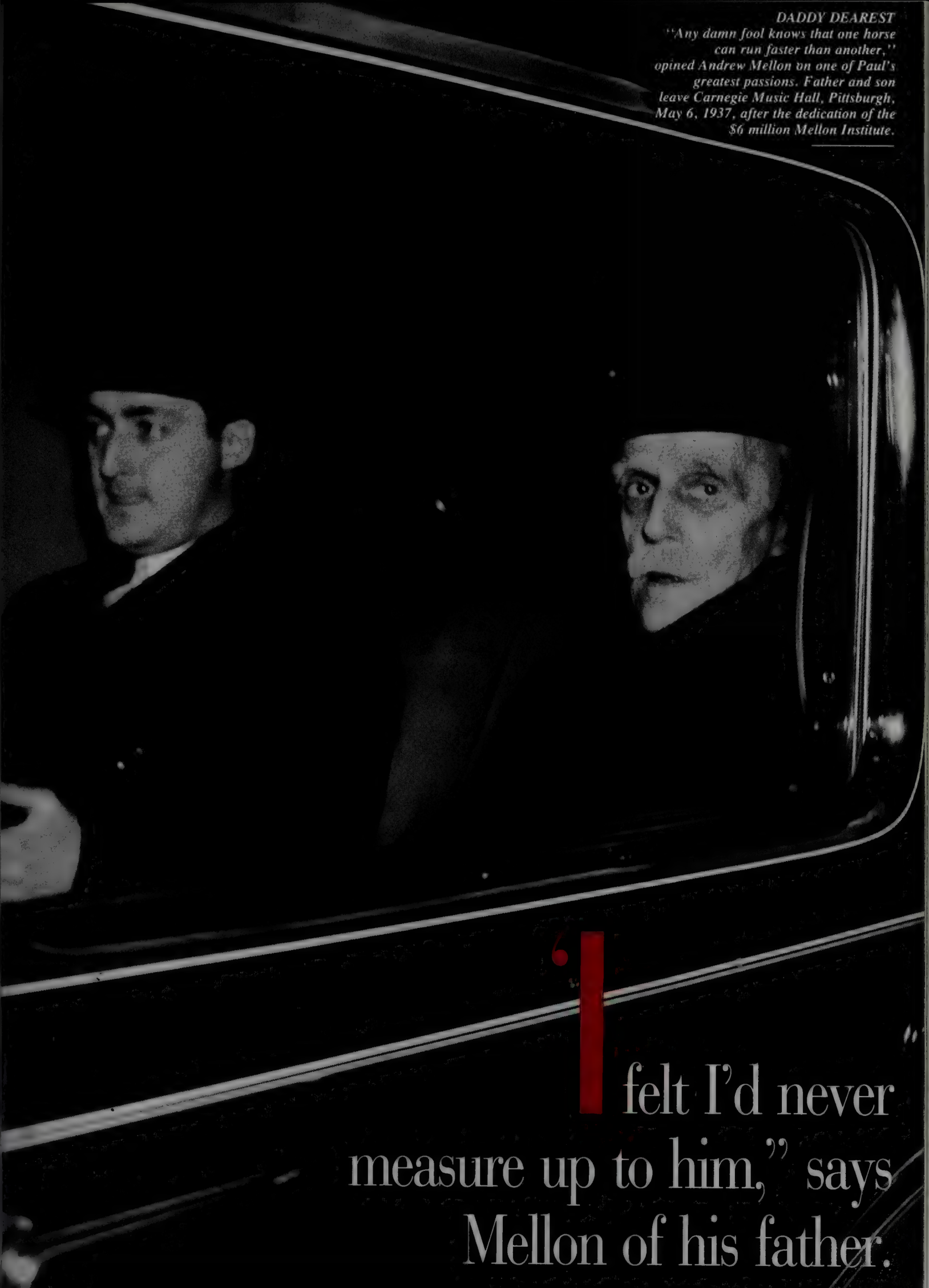
Unlike has-been movie queens and quick-buck instant celebrities, Mellon certainly does not need to write a tell-all autobiography for the money. He has been richer longer than any other living American. When Paul Mellon was a boy, his father, Andrew Mellon—one of the original robber barons of the Gilded Age—was among the three richest men in the United States, along with John D. Rockefeller Sr. and Henry Ford. Today, Paul Mellon's fortune is estimated at more than $800 million, yet he is legendary not for his extraordinary wealth but as the very epitome of taste and style that no amount of money alone can buy.

"The two great aristocrats of America in recent times have been Paul Mellon and Jock Whitney," says John Richardson, the art historian. "They both had great discrimination, great collections, great stables, were at home on both sides of the Atlantic, and kept their enormous philanthropy very quiet."

Indeed, Mellon is all the more esteemed at home and abroad for refusing to become part of international café society. Next to him, Gianni Agnelli seems a bit overeager, Heini Thyssen a tad showy, and Jacob Rothschild is just beginning to get the hang of it. Invitations to one of the Mellons' seven houses—the farm in Upperville, Virginia, the brick mansion off Washington's Embassy Row, the French-style town house off New York's Park Avenue, vacation places on Cape Cod, in Antigua, and one under construction on Nantucket, and a flat on the Avenue Foch in Paris—are as rare as they are coveted. "The whole point about Bunny and Paul is that they're enormously private," says one New York socialite.

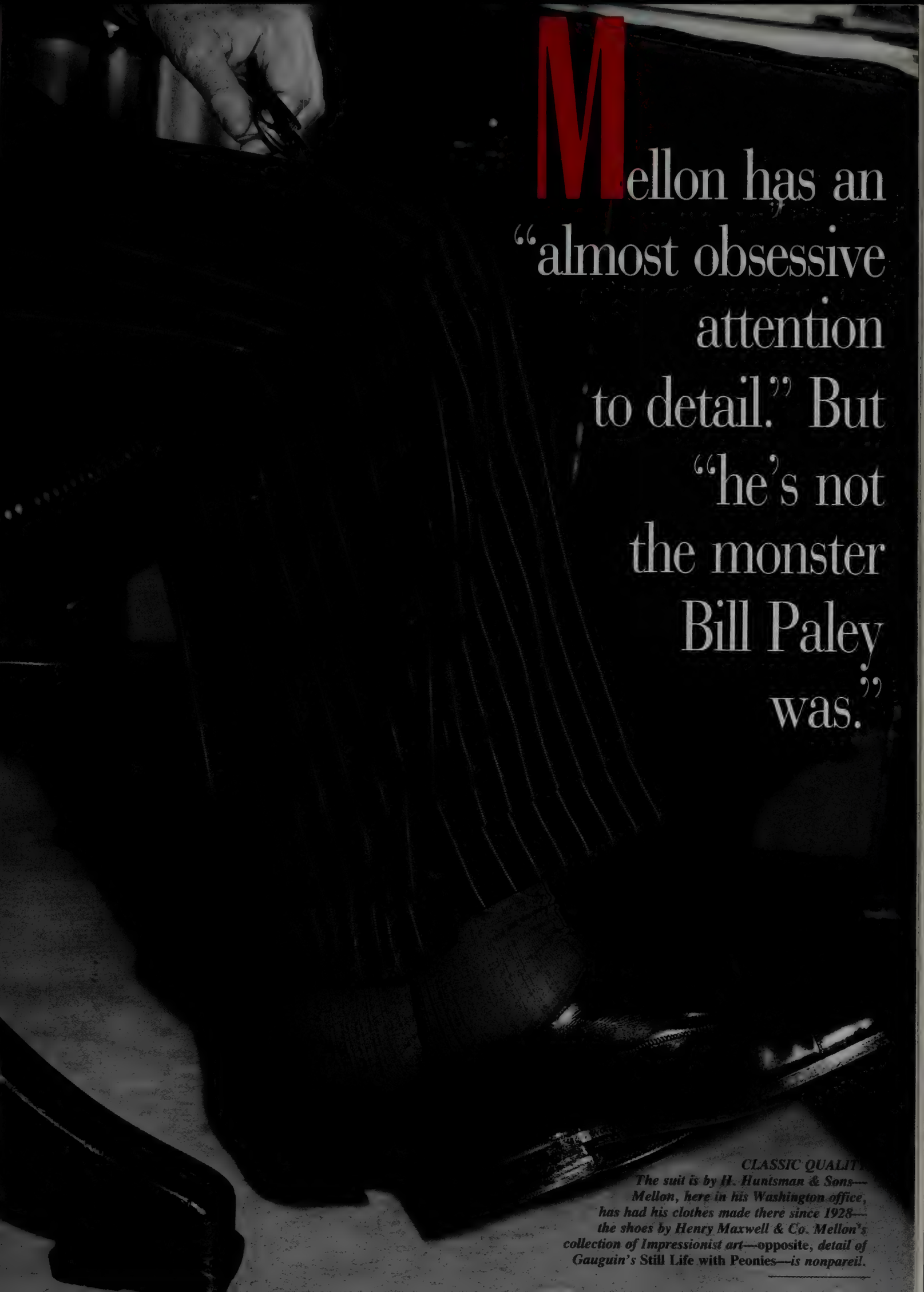
But as inaccessible as the Mellon style is to those who crave to see it, rest assured it is no myth. I. M. Pei, the architect, who has designed three buildings for Paul Mellon, is himself famous for his refinement and exacting standards. The Mellons' taste, he says, is "very understated, but it's there. The house in Upperville is very simple—the architecture, the interiors, great works of art on the walls. But it's nothing like Bill Paley's or Mrs. Astor's, nothing rich like that." Says another frequent guest when questioned about the Mellon style, "It's an absolute and total dream... Bunny runs the houses beautifully. It's the best. Usually, it's a group of four or five [guests] at the most. And you're surrounded by smiling faces who want to do things for you. She's got people who have been there thirty years, and she's always seen that everything is perfect."

And it's a good thing, too. Paul Mel-



DADDY DEAREST
"Any damn fool knows that one horse can run faster than another," opined Andrew Mellon on one of Paul's greatest passions. Father and son leave Carnegie Music Hall, Pittsburgh, May 6, 1937, after the dedication of the $6 million Mellon Institute.

"I felt I'd never measure up to him," says Mellon of his father.



Mellon has an "almost obsessive attention to detail." But "he's not the monster Bill Paley was."

CLASSIC QUALITY
*The suit is by H. Huntsman & Sons—Mellon, here in his Washington office, has had his clothes made there since 1928—the shoes by Henry Maxwell & Co. Mellon's collection of Impressionist art—*opposite, *detail of Gauguin's* Still Life with Peonies*—is nonpareil.*

HAPPY HOURS
A nineteenth-century French Empire clock keeps time in Mellon's library. His current contentment is the result of more than just great riches.

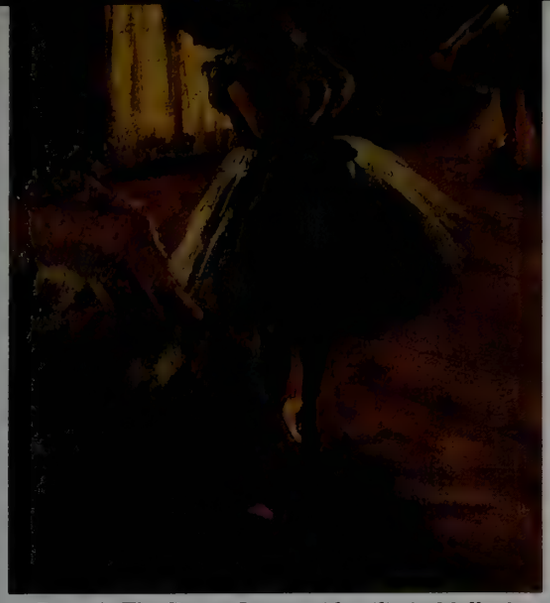
lon is well aware of his "almost obsessive attention to detail." One friend of his wife and of her great friend, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, concurs: "Jackie's told me what a tough time Bunny has with him, keeping up all those houses, because he expects everything to be just so." But another close Mellon friend sees it otherwise: "He *is* very demanding, but it doesn't really come up, because that's the way Bunny would do it anyway. And he's not the monster Bill Paley was—Paul is not demanding half-open yellow rosebuds in Nassau at Christmas."

Mellon is quite the opposite of the typical tycoon. "He's the most unarrogant man that's ever been," says David, Duke of Beaufort, master of the Beaufort Hunt, which Mellon first rode with in the 1930s. "When he used to come hunting with us, he used to stay at a little pub and kept his horses with a farmer. English country people have no idea of rich Americans, and they just thought he was a nice gentleman. They didn't realize he was the richest man in the world. . . . He was very much liked because of his great humility, although being colossally rich." The Earl of Drogheda, Mellon's former son-in-law, agrees. "He's always behaved in the way that the English upper classes like to think they behave," he says. "You can't say anything nasty about him. He was always extremely agreeable and without any sort of side."

That may be why Mellon has willingly exposed himself to what many would consider a harrowing process of self-examination. "I've been thinking about it for a long, long time," Mellon says of his book as a wood fire crackles behind him. "I suppose one of my motives for doing it would be a latent feeling of growing up in the shadow of a great man. And I think that unconsciously I felt that. . . . So writing the autobiography may have been, in a way, a kind of justification."

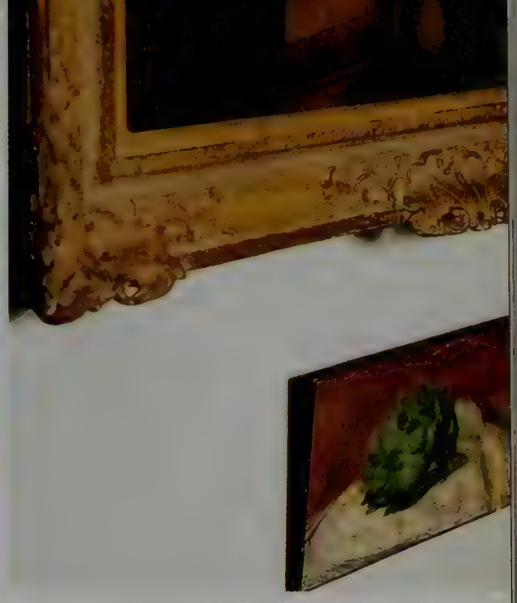
PERFECTIONIST'S ART
Bunny Mellon photographed by Horst in 1977, at King's Leap, the Mellons' vacation house in Antigua. The Mellon style, says a guest, is "an absolute and total dream."

Though that assessment is delivered in a patrician *(Continued on page 230)*



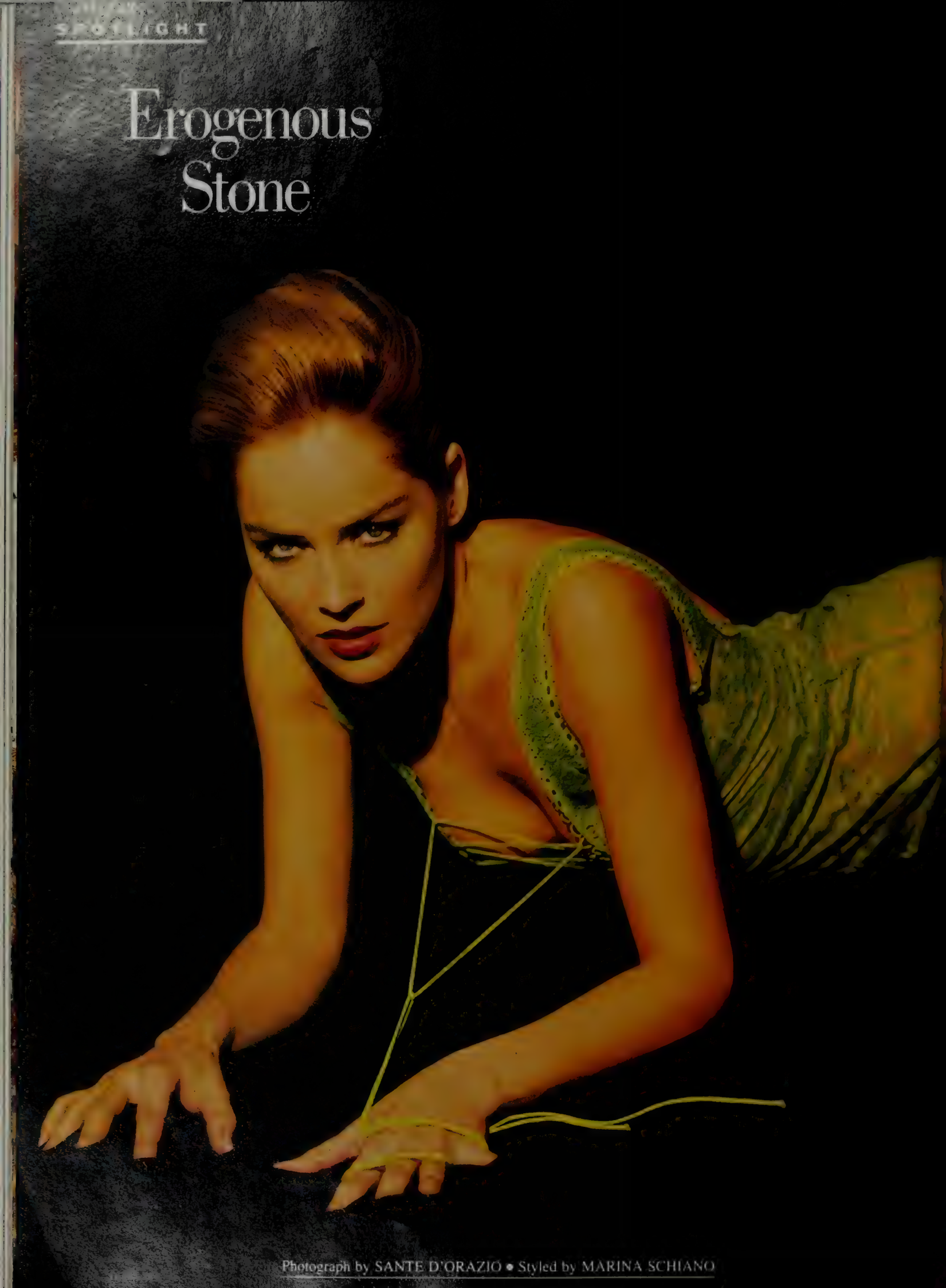
Degas's The Dance Lesson *(detail), in Mellon's Washington living room. "Outside of my first Stubbs, I think that's my favorite picture."*

Antique Hepplewhite chair and trompe l'oeil bookcase in the Washington house—one of seven residences.



Bunny Mellon bought Renoir's oil sketch of an artichoke early in their marriage. "She opened his eyes."

Erogenous Stone



Photograph by SANTE D'ORAZIO • Styled by MARINA SCHIANO

When we told Sharon Stone we were worried we might not be *man enough* for the sexual inflammation of *Basic Instinct*, she chortled, "Eat those oysters, baby! I saw the uncut version. I scared myself." And as a femme fatale, Stone is hard to faze. A beautiful wax exhibit with a willful forehead and dark, strafing eyebrows, she bewitched Ryan O'Neal in *Irreconcilable Differences*, bothered Arnold Schwarzenegger in *Total Recall*, and bewildered Andrew McCarthy in *Year of the Gun*. Mere tryouts. A true femme fatale is a force of nature, says Camille Paglia in *Sexual Personae*, and *Basic Instinct* is Stone's deepest plunge into the nether zone. A bisexual arouser with a nose for coke, Stone's Catherine tingles everyone's receptors. As a moody murder cop, Michael Douglas watches her hotcha moves with eyes of coal. Directed with a branding iron by *Total Recall*'s Paul Verhoeven, this politically incorrect dark-side thriller is rumored to be so violent, so PROVOCATIVE, that it may eventually be released on video in two formats—crispy and extra-crispy.

Ironically, the hoopla over *Basic Instinct* has given Stone wiggle room to get out from under all these heavy breathers. "Primarily because of it I'm getting an opportunity at better projects." She'd like to expand the knack for knockabout comedy she showed in *He Said, She Said*. But right now she can bask. "This is the best time so far. I feel like I'm on time. I'm right on time." These days it's almost perverse to be so hopeful, we tell her. "Then celebrate your perversity," she says. We better start ordering those oysters now.

—JAMES WOLCOTT

HAIR BY KEVIN MANCUSO. MAKEUP BY ANDREA PAOLETTI. BOTH AT PIERRE MICHEL. DRESS BY JEAN PAUL GAULTIER. SHOES BY DIEGO DELLA VALLE

SHARON STONE

A true femme fatale is a force of nature.

EARL and LYNDON

An imaginary conversation by NORMAN MAILER

From The Memoirs of Chief Justice Earl Warren, *by Earl Warren:*

Behind the casket was a saddled but riderless horse with a sheathed sword across the saddle and boots reversed in the stirrups, representing, according to custom, the loss of a leader. Heading the six-block march to the Cathedral was Mrs. Kennedy between the two brothers of her husband, Robert and Edward. Following them were President and Mrs. Johnson; then the rest of the dignitaries who had gathered for this mournful occasion from all over the world. . . .

After the ceremony, the caravan formed again, this time in cars, for the long trip across the Potomac to the last resting place of John Fitzgerald Kennedy in Arlington Cemetery. Hundreds of thousands of grief-stricken citizens silently stood along the route and watched. There, after a brief committal service conducted by Cardinal Cushing, Mrs. Kennedy lit the Eternal Flame at the head of the grave, and the throng, still stunned by sadness, dispersed and went silently to their homes.

Government must go on no matter what impediments confront it, so everyone was at his or her station Tuesday morning. That is not to say that government was normal. It was not. The thinking of most Americans was chaotic. . . . Amazing stories by supposed witnesses were published along with theories predicated on them, and most of the theories had to do with imagined conspiracies of various kinds. Many agencies announced the probability of holding public investigations independent of the others. . . . Things were moving in a crescendo when on Friday, November 29, there was a request to my office for a conference as soon as possible with the Deputy Attorney General, Nicholas Katzenbach, and Solicitor General Archibald Cox. I agreed to see them immediately, and they arrived in my office very shortly thereafter.

They informed me that President Johnson, in an effort to bring order out of confusion, had determined to establish a bipartisan commission of outstanding people to investigate the entire affair and report the true facts regardless of consequences. . . . The President, they said, wanted to know if I would serve as chairman of such a commission. I told them I thought the President was wise in having such a commission, but that I was not available for service on it. . . . I was sure that every member of the Court was of the opinion that such appointments were not in its best interests. . . . First, it is not in the spirit of constitutional separation of powers to have a member of the Supreme Court serve on a presidential commission; second, it would distract a Justice from the work of the Court, which had a heavy docket; and, third, it was impossible to foresee what litigation such a commission might spawn, with resulting disqualification of the Justice from sitting on such cases. I told them that, historically . . . the appointment of Justice Roberts as chairman to investigate the Pearl Harbor disaster had served no good purpose, and that the action of Justice Robert Jackson in leaving the Court for a year to become chief prosecutor at Nuremberg after World War II had resulted in divisiveness and internal bitterness on the Court. I asked the Deputy Attorney General and Solicitor General to convey my respects to the President, but to tell him that, consistent with my own beliefs and those of the other members of the Court as I understood them, I must respectfully decline the honor.

I considered the matter closed. However, about three-thirty that same afternoon I received a call from the White House asking if I could come to see the President and saying that it was quite urgent. I, of course, said that I would do so, and very soon thereafter I went to his office.

[*They are alone in the Oval Office.*]

LYNDON: Sitting here and meditating, Chief Justice, on the horrible and heart-rending events of last week, I've come to realize we haven't had ten minutes of private conversation between you and me in all these many years of your service in Washington, yet there is nobody in our three branches of government to whom I am ready to tender more respect.

EARL: That's a most generous remark, Mr. President, and I thank you for it.

LYNDON: I want to relieve any uneasiness you might feel over this meeting. I can certainly understand your demurrers this morning. Katzenbach and Archie Cox trotted right back here after their session with you, and they briefed me on your objections. So, it is clear to me why, in all sincerity, you feel that you cannot head up my proposed commission of inquiry into Jack's death. There is a solemn heft to your logic in these reservations. I believe I comprehend. For the Supreme Court to function at the highest level, relations among you nine renowned men must remain collegial, yessir. And that,

Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren with L.B.J.

Illustration by PHILIP BURKE

I now recognize, depends on unvoiced agreements with your brethren. I do indeed comprehend. Without the mutual if unspoken understanding that none of you will accept outside tasks, you nine supreme judges, under the most parlous circumstances, could return, even *revert,* to emotions some of you used to feel, maybe could have felt, before you donned the robes back in those days when you were but nine high-powered lawyers. You do not have to tell me. I know. It figures. A Supreme Court justice has to be highly principled, but it does cut to the quick if one of his brothers should take on some outside role or function that might be viewed as more prestigious by the world of opinion. Hell, there's not supposed to be anything more important than a seat on the Supreme Court, so what is one leaving it for?

EARL: Mr. President, that is what I attempted to convey this morning to Mr. Katzenbach and Mr. Cox, and I see that they relayed my sentiments on to you most accurately, whereupon you have enriched them with your personal interpretation.

LYNDON: That's what it is all about. Before you start to look at a problem, try to see it through the other man's eyes.

EARL: Can I count, therefore, on your full understanding of why, this morning, I did have to decline the honor of serving as chairman of your presidential commission?

LYNDON: You can bet I understood, Chief Justice. I know what you believe in. I honor your work. That is why I appreciate your flexibility in coming over here this afternoon after you said no this morning.

EARL: I had to. You are the president of the United States. Who can conceive of all you have had to bear up under in the last seven days?

LYNDON: Let me nod most lugubriously to that. Last Friday, November 22, 1963, Jack Kennedy was alive. Today, he is one week deceased. From a Friday to a Friday. Mortality feels as close to me at this moment as the palm of my hand if you had just stripped off the skin. I think of Jack all the time. I speak to him in my dreams. "Keep it afloat," he says to me, "keep this mighty republic seaworthy." "I will try to, Jack," I tell him.

EARL: There is no way for us to cease thinking about it. My daughter came into my study on Sunday and said, "Daddy, Lee Harvey Oswald has just been shot." "Oh, Lord, Dorothy," I told her, "don't repeat such rumors." "Daddy," she said, "it's not a rumor. I just saw him shot on television."

LYNDON: There you are. Chief Justice, the nation is in an unparalleled situation. The crazy house has come to town. Nothing like it since the death of Abraham Lincoln. Worse perhaps. We are desperately in need of greatness. Earl—I want to call you Earl—have you ever applied your mind to the concept of what is a great American?

EARL: Mr. President, I muse about that sometimes.

LYNDON: I ponder it all the time. Being a great American goes to the essence of why I asked you over here today. The human dimensions of any great American are, in my opinion, poorly comprehended. In fact, the public attitude partakes of condescension. Most people believe that a great man is *born*. Period. That's all. Fate takes care of his greatness thereafter. What the hell, he is destined to become great. I say there's more to Abraham Lincoln than predestination. I'll offer you my concept: The great American is a man ready to search out a way through the labyrinths of hell. He is a master of the rite of passage. He can deal with the illimitable corruptibility of the human spirit, yet not turn corrupt himself. That is no ordinary feat. Lord, no! It is the most isolated goddamn condition in the world. It is a true abyss of isolation. Earl, you and I inhabit that vast and empty place. There can't be many people in America who know what is incumbent upon our position. 'Cause we are the ones who make the decisions nobody else wants to get near to, not when the responsibility is cosmically large, and there is no one with whom to share your awesome doubts. We are the two loneliest men in the country. I wish to salute you.

EARL: I've found only one formula. It's to keep my eye on the target and stay at my allotted task. It's to keep on maintaining the collegiality of my eight brothers. It is my belief that the Supreme Court, when convening properly, offers a great sense of peace, security, and wise decision to our American people.

LYNDON: I hear every word you say. I hear every word you say. Nonetheless, I must reply: Earl, this nation needs you to set out on a long and perilous journey. You must go into the uncharted and the unknown.

EARL: I'm not here to argue with a president of the United States...I wouldn't know how.

LYNDON: You don't have to. We are engaged in a process of reasoning together. I maintain that incredible times can call for the temporary suspension of our best and most time-honored axioms, precedents, and judgments. This hour might just be one of those rare occasions. Only two of us in this room, right?

EARL: You and me.

LYNDON: Just you and me.

EARL: I believe you see the situation as urgent.

LYNDON: Worse than urgent. The situation is critical. Earl, I am going to lay my cards out. I will conceal nothing. The murder of President Kennedy was a terrible deed, but most of us could kind of comprehend it. To some degree. We could see how one crazy young man could do it. We all know crazy young men. It's a nice family doesn't have such a fellow in the back room. But then Jack Ruby came along two days later. We may never recover from the death he inflicted. The echoes reverberated around the world. Out in the grass huts of Africa and in the rice paddies of Southeast Asia, they now share one belief. It is that John Fitzgerald Kennedy was not killed by a crazy man who in turn was killed by *another* crazy man. No, they see it as a conspiracy. You have to know what that does to the credibility of this country. We are staggering around with an open wound which has ominous potential. At this moment, down in Texas, the state and local Dallas authorities are getting ready to hold their public investigation with television coverage. Earl, I love Texas, but I have to recognize that it has more polecats per capita than any other state in the union. Venality is as common as cow turds down there. A Texas commission! It cannot fail to be self-serving, inflammatory, and dishonest. The U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives are whipping themselves up equally for high-spotlight investigations. We will have a Tower of Babel. Can we afford it? Earl, my dogs tell me that you are the man to save this situation. You are respected around the world. Even those French intellectuals who don't cotton to

anything they haven't thought of first respect the hell out of you. So I don't want to hear about collegiality. Because you were a soldier in World War I, right, a first lieutenant, infantry, correct? There wasn't anything you weren't ready to do for that uniform. Well, I'll inform you, there was nothing you could ever do then in that uniform comparable to what you can do for your country right now in this hour of trouble. Earl, we must have a commission headed by a man whom the people of this globe will trust: a Warren Commission. Because the gravity of the situation is such that it could all lead to war. I spoke last night to McNamara. Know what our secretary of defense gave me for his estimate? A nuclear first strike dropped on us would cause the loss of 40 million Americans. Don't even count the dead that our retaliation would produce in Soviet Europe and Asia.

EARL: Mr. President, should the situation be as serious as you say, then my personal views may not have the right to prevail.

LYNDON: That is precisely what I was hoping to hear you say.

EARL: But is it truly that serious? Are we not reacting to the prodigious impact of the shock?

LYNDON: Earl, on the basis of what you know, that is a reasonable remark. But there is dire stuff that you don't know. Which I am ready to tell. But I can't. No, I can't until you are ready to come on board.

EARL: You are saying that I have to take what could become one of the largest steps in my life entirely on faith?

LYNDON: On faith. On faith in me, Earl. It is that serious, it is that confidential. I am your president, and I give you my vow that the situation could most certainly lead to war. My vow, Earl, not my promise. Now, in turn, I need your vow that you are wholeheartedly on board.

EARL: Mr. President, out of respect for your vow, I have to recognize that there is no choice. I am bound, I see, to accept this commission.

LYNDON: Bless you. Bless your kin. Because now I can reveal that which is concealed, and thereby get you to feel a little more wholehearted about your acceptance.

EARL: I would appreciate that.

LYNDON: Speak not only to the mind of a judge, but to his heart.

EARL: Shakespeare?

LYNDON: Texas. Old Texas talk. Speak not only to the mind of a judge, but to his belly. Here, in the capital, I amend it to "heart," but "belly" is about as apt. If you can't digest a case, you can't honor your own ruling. You can't say "So found" in a good voice when there's butterflies in your gut.

EARL: I would call that de facto, Mr. President.

LYNDON: Good. We comprehend each other. We can get down to the gist of things. There's a hell of a lot of talk going on in this country right now that the Russians did it. The rest of the world is offering a lot of equally loose talk that some of us Americans did it. Why? So we could start a war with Russia. That's a built-in drama of nuclear escalation.

EARL: Don't we know that Oswald did it? Can't we arrive at such a conclusion without doubt?

LYNDON: No, sir. Oswald is the wild hair right in the orifice of the problem. To the Russians he does not seem to be just a little dodo with half-assed radical opinions. From their point of view, he is kind of sinister. God Almighty, they had to wonder what was up when he defected to the Soviets in Moscow. Look at Oswald from their point of view. A former U.S. Marine! And he used to work in radar spotting at Atsugi air base near Tokyo. Did you know that the air force was squirreling away a secret plane on that base, and it happened to be nothing less than the U-2, the same U-2 that Francis Gary Powers bailed out of in 1960. Just think how the K.G.B. reacted when Oswald showed up in Moscow in 1959 with the information that the U-2 used to report in to Atsugi at seventy-five angels.

EARL: Seventy-five thousand feet high?

LYNDON: Exactly. That was highly privileged information in October 1959. You can bet the Soviets looked askance at this ex-Marine who walks in. Just assume you are K.G.B., Earl. They are asked to believe that this particular radar operator on a secret air base in Japan was allowed by the C.I.A., naval intelligence, air-force intelligence, the F.B.I., and the State Department to take a trip to Russia? The K.G.B. had to be convinced Oswald was an agent planted by us.

EARL: Are you saying he was?

LYNDON: Ask, but ye shall not find—our intelligence people are still searching their files. By God, you don't think they can afford to admit they got any tit caught in the wringer, do you? Earl, Oswald *was* or *was not* working for U.S. intelligence, but nothing you can work with is going to surface in a hurry.

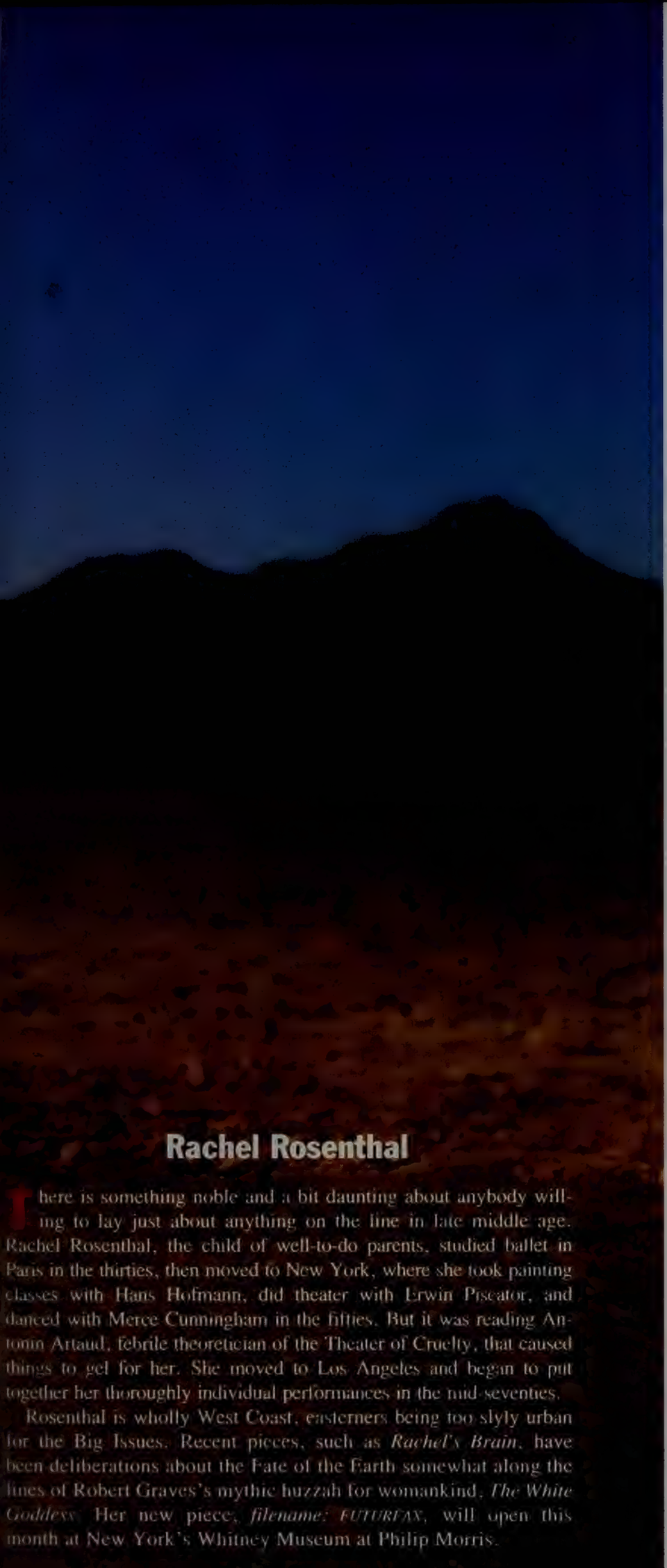
EARL: You are asserting, then, that the K.G.B. saw Lee Harvey Oswald as some kind of intelligence agent for us?

LYNDON: They had to, Earl. They must have had a dozen of their people following his every step. Why, that Russian girl he married might have had to report to them. Who knows? For whatever reason, he comes back with her and their baby. But how does he get back? Why do we let him in? Who is keeping those files now? Which organ of us? Or them? *(Continued on page 260)*

> "Last Friday, November 22, 1963, Jack Kennedy was alive. Today, he is one week deceased. From a Friday to a Friday."

LIVE ART

Annie Leibovitz photographs five women who shock



Rachel Rosenthal

There is something noble and a bit daunting about anybody willing to lay just about anything on the line in late middle age. Rachel Rosenthal, the child of well-to-do parents, studied ballet in Paris in the thirties, then moved to New York, where she took painting classes with Hans Hofmann, did theater with Erwin Piscator, and danced with Merce Cunningham in the fifties. But it was reading Antonin Artaud, febrile theoretician of the Theater of Cruelty, that caused things to gel for her. She moved to Los Angeles and began to put together her thoroughly individual performances in the mid-seventies.

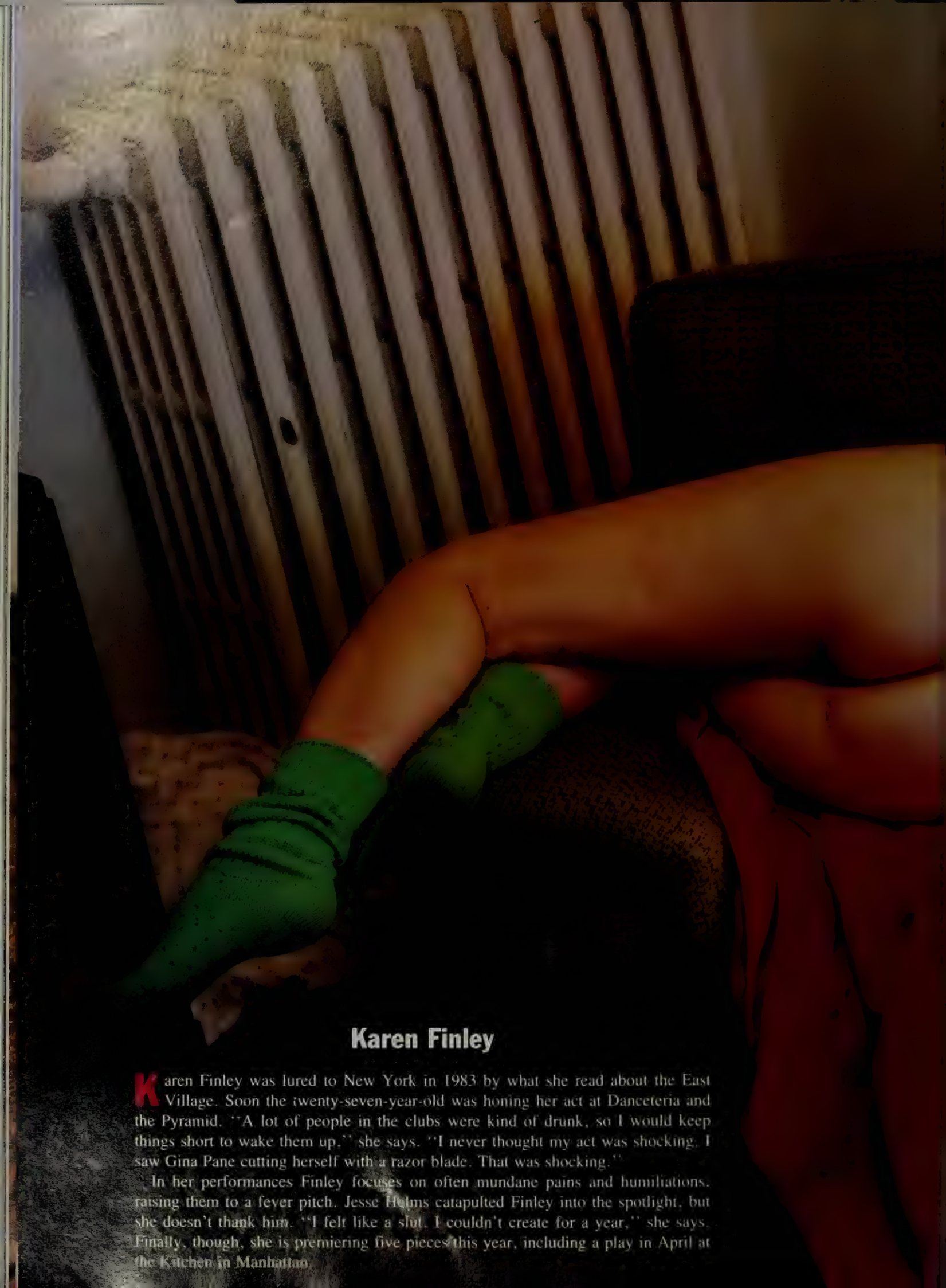
Rosenthal is wholly West Coast, easterners being too slyly urban for the Big Issues. Recent pieces, such as *Rachel's Brain*, have been deliberations about the Fate of the Earth somewhat along the lines of Robert Graves's mythic huzzah for womankind, *The White Goddess*. Her new piece, *filename: FUTURFAX*, will open this month at New York's Whitney Museum at Philip Morris.

They enact the most private dreams or the bleakest nightmares of the decorous woman, the sensible man. They are the women of performance art, and their prominence in the field is no accident. Performance art, after all, is the brattish offspring of theater, dance, and music, as well as the visual arts, and its theatrical roots secured *(Text continued on page 212)*

Cindy Sherman

Cindy Sherman at large—and we're not saying which of these people *is* Cindy Sherman—has a pale, washy look, like a Polaroid before it fully develops, as if she pops into 3-D only when enacting a character of her own devising. Even as a child, she would put on makeup for hours at a time, but with a peculiar objectivity.

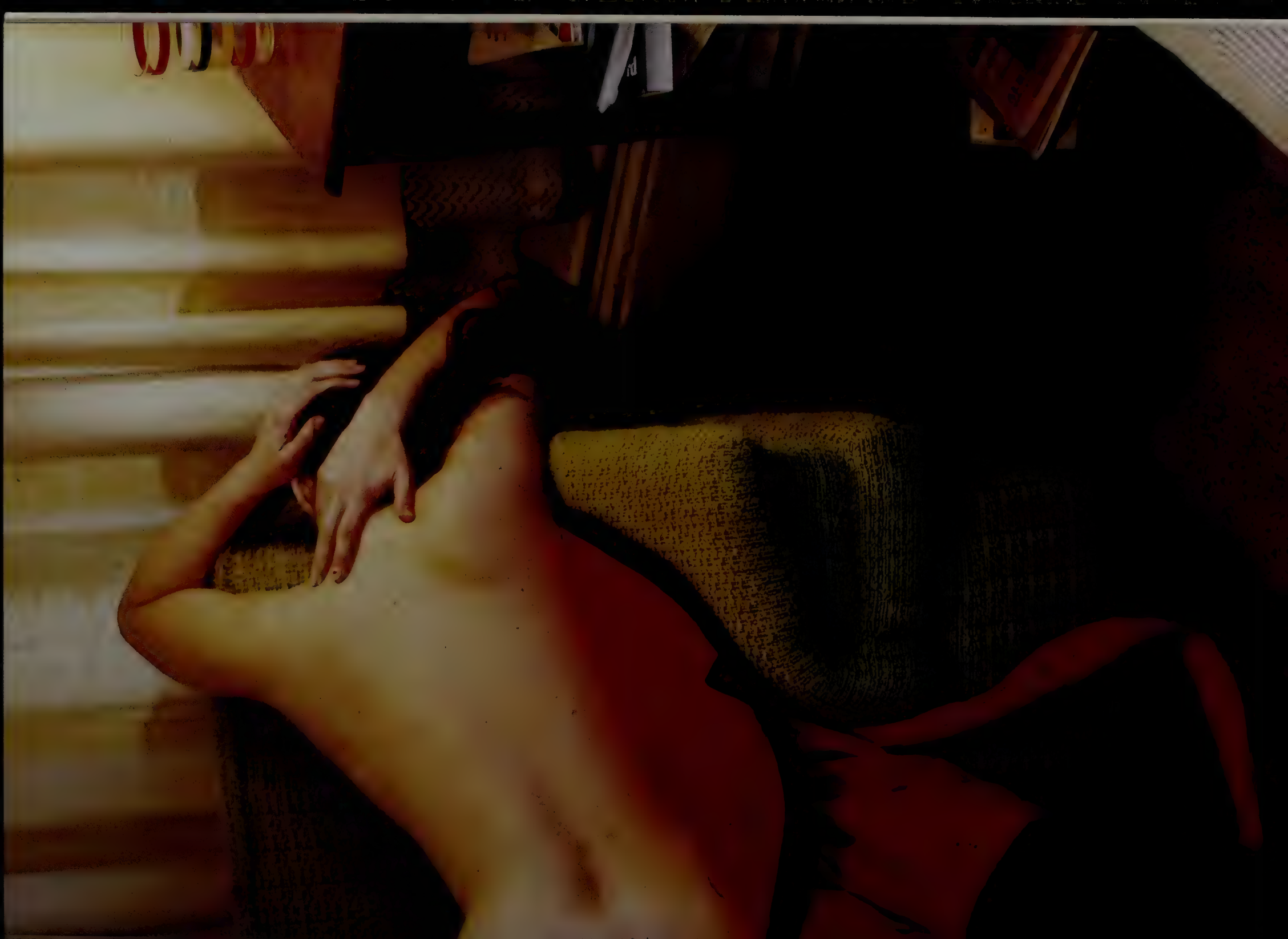
Her unique performance-art photographs have developed richly. Critic Peter Schjeldahl says simply that Sherman was "the best American artist of the eighties."

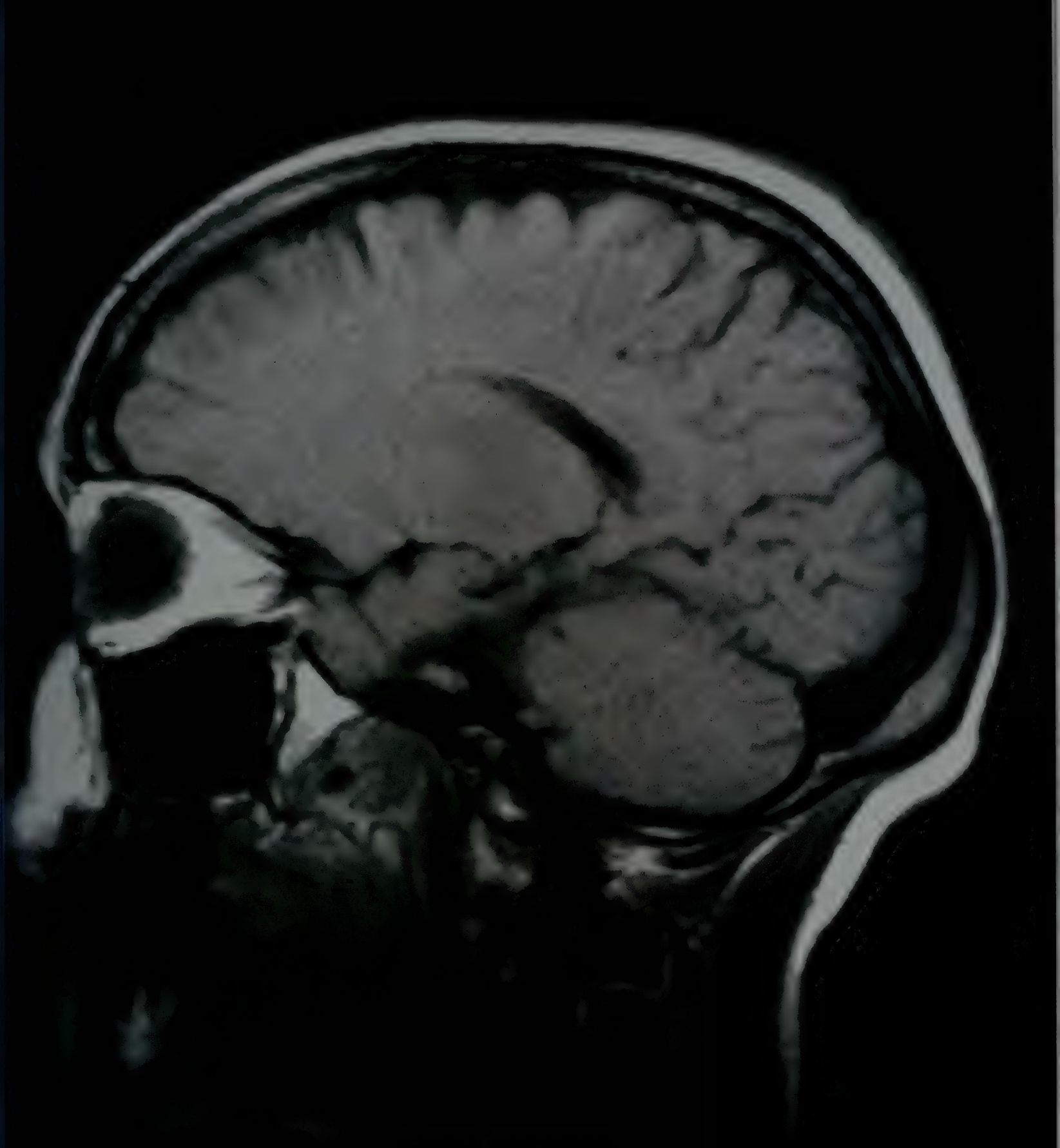


Karen Finley

Karen Finley was lured to New York in 1983 by what she read about the East Village. Soon the twenty-seven-year-old was honing her act at Danceteria and the Pyramid. "A lot of people in the clubs were kind of drunk, so I would keep things short to wake them up," she says. "I never thought my act was shocking. I saw Gina Pane cutting herself with a razor blade. That was shocking."

In her performances Finley focuses on often mundane pains and humiliations, raising them to a fever pitch. Jesse Helms catapulted Finley into the spotlight, but she doesn't thank him. "I felt like a slut. I couldn't create for a year," she says. Finally, though, she is premiering five pieces this year, including a play in April at the Kitchen in Manhattan.





Laurie Anderson

Laurie Anderson mounted her first piece at a Vermont band shell: she conducted a symphony of automobile horns. A couple of years later she played the violin on New York's Fifty-ninth Street Bridge wearing skates frozen into blocks of melting ice. Anderson can be funny in a genre not quite immune from self-importance. This makes it even more odd that it was Anderson who first gave a wide public a defining sense of just what performance art actually was, becoming in the process a medium-range Pop Star.

Anderson grew up in a Chicago suburb, one of eight children, who put together an orchestra because they didn't have television. She played violin with the Chicago Youth Symphony, then studied art history and sculpture in New York. It was a time when "commodity" art—the easel painting, the sculpture on a pedestal—was scorned and performance art was an agreeable alternative. Anderson's contribution was her combination of musical, visual, and verbal skills with a high-tech brio. Annie Leibovitz's portrait, itself appropriately high-tech, incorporates an M.R.I.—magnetic resonance imaging—brain scan. Anderson's new show tours Spain and Germany in May.

women equal billing long before they got it in the buttoned-up "manual" art worlds of painting and sculpture.

Performance art was around at the beginnings of modernism, but began to loom large in America only with the happenings of the sixties. In 1963, when the young artist Carolee Schneemann appeared naked and paint-daubed in *Eye Body,* she was serving notice that it was her body—to use as she chose—and nobody else's piece of fantasy furniture. Other performers were darker. When Gina Pane raised blisters on her arm with a boiling kettle, a fellow artist understandably pulled the plug. "These women were the high priestesses of the avant-garde," says the art writer Paul Taylor.

"The audience can't bypass the issues, the way they can with painting or sculpture."

Performance art continued to be a useful vehicle as the national mood soured, and it had many features that made it particularly appealing to women. "It's very inexpensive," observes Annie Leibovitz. Meaning no bronze to cast, no marble to carve, no expensive pigments.

It is also very forthright. "In performance, women dealing with very difficult issues to do with sex or race can get a very direct response," says Marcia Tucker, director of Manhattan's New Museum of Contemporary Art. "The audience can't bypass the issues, the way they can with painting or sculpture.

"Another thing is that a lot of it is very funny.... Humor can often do more to change people's minds than anything you can do in the visual arts."

It could also be successful. In 1981, "O Superman," a single made for $400 by the thistle-haired Laurie Anderson, reached No. 2 on the U.K. pop charts, and her first album, *Big Science,* sold almost half a million copies in the United States. Performance art was showcased throughout the decade at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival. And monologuists like Eric Bogosian, who came out of performance, were up there alongside Lily Tomlin, Sandra Bernhard, and Whoopi Goldberg, who came out of stand-up.

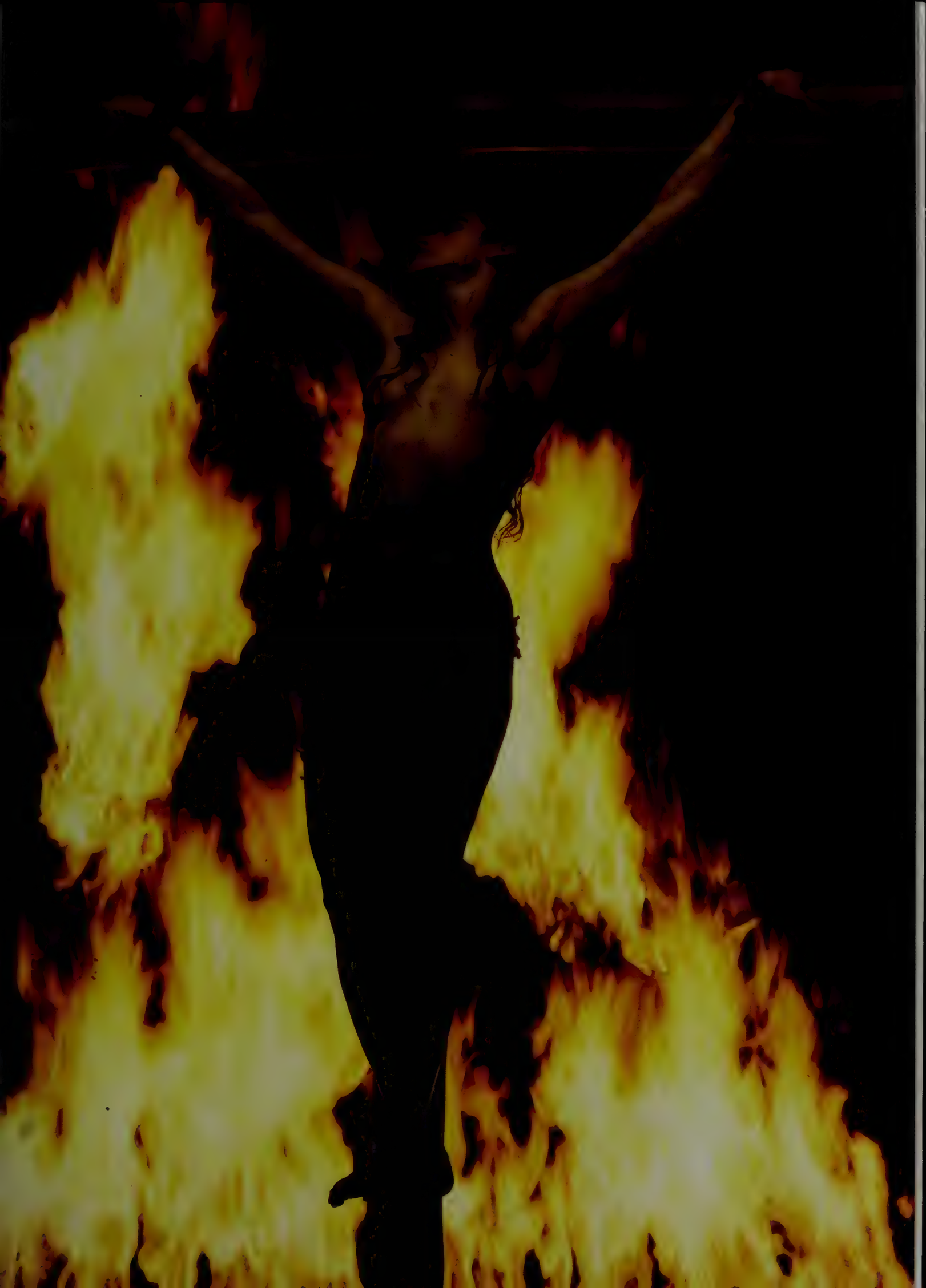
Some resent this magnitude of success, as though performance art were in the process of being smothered by popular applause, congealed in the video culture. There seems small risk of that. Not as long as Jesse Helms, the Reverend Donald Wildmon, and their fellows fly into witch-burning mode upon being confronted by (I assume secondhand reports of) the work of, for instance, Karen Finley. The recent dumping of that malleable administrator of the N.E.A., John Frohnmayer, is a reminder that the United States—which spends less on the arts than almost anywhere in the developed world—is increasingly controlled by a thinking that has little to do with values and a great deal to do with anger and fear.

—ANTHONY HADEN-GUEST

Diamanda Galás

The Crucifixion is such an intensely loaded image that artists using it had better be trying for more than juvenile shock. The ante is upped when the figure is that of a naked woman—an image employed by artists as different as Julian Schnabel and Edwina Sandys—but if any performance artist has earned the right it is Diamanda Galás.

Galás, a Greek-American raised in Southern California, is a singer with the three-and-a-half-octave range of classical opera, but she infuses her singing with the dark caterwauling intensity of the blues. Her anger can blister paint. During the past decade, much of that anger has been about AIDS, of which her brother died in 1986. Two years ago she presented her Poe-based mass, *Masque of the Red Death,* at New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Her program notes, prefiguring this photograph, scorned "those who've twisted Christ's teaching into socially sanctioned condemnation of sexual difference." In *Diamanda Galás: The Singer,* her forthcoming album, she breaks new ground, using her grand-opera voice and punk sensibility on gospel and blues material. She tours the U.S. in April and Europe in May. □



Ciao, Tina

In approaching her death from AIDS, Tina Chow found the sense of mission that had eluded her in her years as the stylish enchantress who reigned over the beau monde in-spot restaurants she created with her then husband, Michael Chow. As MAUREEN ORTH reports, Tina fought the disease and its preconceptions—especially the lack of respect for women with AIDS—with her unerring grace, making her death her most bravely beautiful statement

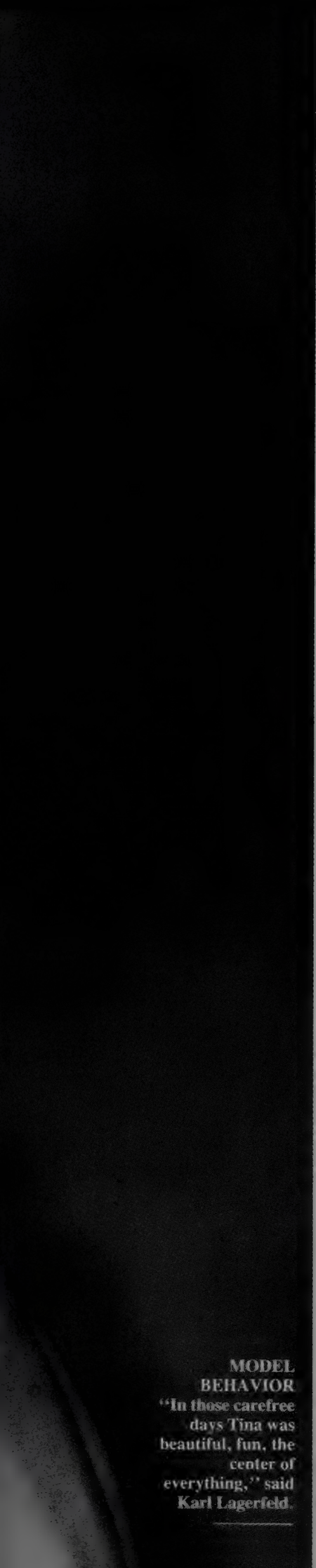
Shortly after the memorial service for Tina Chow in Los Angeles on Valentine's Day, her family, who had been a model of selfless devotion through her long struggle with AIDS, gathered to discuss whether they couldn't have done yet more to help her. Had they been right, they asked themselves, to let her reject conventional treatment and battle the disease in her own way, without AZT? However agonizing it had been for them to see their beautiful Tina suffering so, especially with the added disadvantage of being a woman with the disease, Tina's sister, Adelle, known as Bonny, concluded that the answer was yes. "I told my parents what I felt when I was sitting alone one night getting anxious about missing Tina and then suddenly feeling this great warmth around me, and what I felt she was saying. It was 'Our choices are our own.' "

By the end, the once glamorous and often imitated Tina Chow had had it with chic thrills. In battling AIDS, she re-created herself, from passive to aggressive, from enabler to achiever. She retreated totally from her earlier, gilded life in London and New York to the rugged California coastline, and in the last year she began to sculpt in wood. According to Bonny, the act of creation was the one thing "that transformed and enlivened her."

Her family had respected her choices because they understood that Tina's transformation would give the meaning to her life that she desired. "We were raised in this Asian way, in that we're not really adept at expressing our feelings and our rights," says Bonny. "The most important thing to Tina was that she learned to be honest and much more open with everyone, across the board."

Tina Chow's story is the classic woman's tale of the struggle to define herself—in her case, beyond the social world in which she dazzled so effortlessly, beyond her former husband's image of her, beyond the satisfaction of being a fabulous clothes hanger for others' creations. It's about going from The Look to The Work. That she succeeded in the end was expressed by her brother-in-law, David Byrne, in the words of a song he wrote and sang at the Valentine's Day memorial:

Runnin naked like the day when I was born
They're all naked in the land where I come from
I'm a long long way from New York City now.
We're all naked if you turn us inside out.



MODEL BEHAVIOR
"In those carefree days Tina was beautiful, fun, the center of everything," said Karl Lagerfeld.

DAVID BAILEY

"She wasn't like a woman, but an objet dressed."

THE FAME GAME Jean-Michel Basquiat, Tina, and Andy Warhol at Mr. Chow in New York, about 1986. *Opposite*, Helmut Newton's 1984 photograph of Tina and Michael Chow in their Beverly Hills restaurant. "That picture is their marriage," said Peter Schlesinger.

Tina never thought she was beautiful, but she was the one everyone came to see. Mick would be there with Bianca back then, and Jerry Hall with Bryan Ferry. There was Issey Miyake on the left, Karl Lagerfeld on the right. David Hockney, Manolo Blahnik, David Bailey, Joan Collins, Peter O'Toole, Bernardo Bertolucci, Lauren Bacall. Mr. Chow in London in the seventies was a glamorous bath of the visual hip-snob elite—artists, designers, photographers, models, all crunching on green-black seaweed as the champagne flowed. The nouvelle Chinese cuisine was superb, the presentation by the Italian waiters flawless. Michael Chow had anticipated this new era of chichi restaurants that replaced the Old Guard's private clubs: he had envisioned the Environment. People kept his menus as pieces of art.

You went to Mr. Chow to show off or to check out who was in town from everywhere that mattered. But what kept you coming back, night after night, year after year for almost a decade, was the aura of Tina Chow.

Tina Chow, Tina Chow, Tina Chow, whispered the slaves of style in her heady wake. What's she wearing, where's she going, who's she talking to? When it came to taste, she was like DiMaggio at the plate or Marilyn on a subway grate—she knew she had it, and there was nothing she could do about it.

From the moment one passed through the glass doors, with the tiny TORA TORA TORA engraved at eye level so that no one would crash into them by mistake, and ascended the spiral staircase, Tina Chow's ineffable presence was immediately felt. "When she brought you upstairs or sat with you for a moment, it was like entering heaven," says the artist Peter Schlesinger. "In those carefree days she was beautiful, fun, the center of everything," adds Lagerfeld. If you were a star, there'd be a star by your name on the reservations list; if you were a friend, a heart.

Tina Chow was known for both her star quality and her heart; she was an unjaded, upbeat, enthusiastic half-Japanese, half-American jewel set loose among mannered aesthetes. They worshiped her androgynous angularity. "She wasn't like a woman, but an *objet* dressed," says the fashionable London decorator Nicky Haslam. "Tina did

PHOTOGRAPHS: LEFT, BY PATRICK McMULLAN; RIGHT, BY HELMUT NEWTON

have a depth of subtlety, but she was very, very simple at heart and rather dazzled by it all. She was very sure of her taste, but not sure of herself."

Indeed, in those days one might even catch Bettina Louise Lutz Chow, daughter of an Ohio soldier and a Japanese war bride, glancing over at her husband for encouragement. Michael Chow, twelve years her senior, was not only an exacting impresario and connoisseur collector of Art Deco furniture but also the son of a Chinese theatrical legend. He had forged an ace team: he conceptualized, his wife executed. As she once said, her job was "to keep the party going." And nobody did it better: after Mr. Chow conquered London in the late sixties and early seventies, there was Mr. Chow in Los Angeles in the mid-seventies, and then Mr. Chow in New York in the late seventies and early eighties. There were Jackie O and John Lennon and Andy Warhol, Jack and Anjelica, the Beach Boys, and Francis Coppola. And always there was Tina Chow, rising at dawn to buy the flowers she put together so dramatically for the restaurant she had closed very late the night before, and somehow trying to mother her young daughter and son at the same time.

As the years passed, the degree of control exercised by Michael and the self-imposed standards of chic perfection demanded by the Chows' way of life took their toll on the marriage, and by 1987 friends saw that Tina was trying to fill the void, reaching for an identity of her own. Yet she was still the dutiful partner, helping to supervise the restaurants. And she still cross-pollinated the fashion landscape just by dripping simplicity and elegance. She was a Gap ad, she was a Saint Laurent campaign—there was nothing in between. Every time she alighted in a fashion capital, the world's greatest celebrity photographers lined up to take her portrait. Cecil Beaton, Helmut Newton, Richard Avedon, Snowdon, Robert Mapplethorpe, Steven Meisel, Herb Ritts—Tina Chow sat for all of them. "There are very few women who have quite the elegance, the taste, that she had," says Helmut Newton. But, for all of that, the polished *femme du monde* retained a kind of girlish vulnerability. Perhaps that was why, when Tina Chow died of AIDS in January, her mourners felt not only *(Continued on page 253)*

HEALING STONES
Tina in Pacific Palisades in January 1990. Combining a strict macrobiotic diet, Tibetan medicines, and psychic healers with conventional medicine, she survived two and a half years.

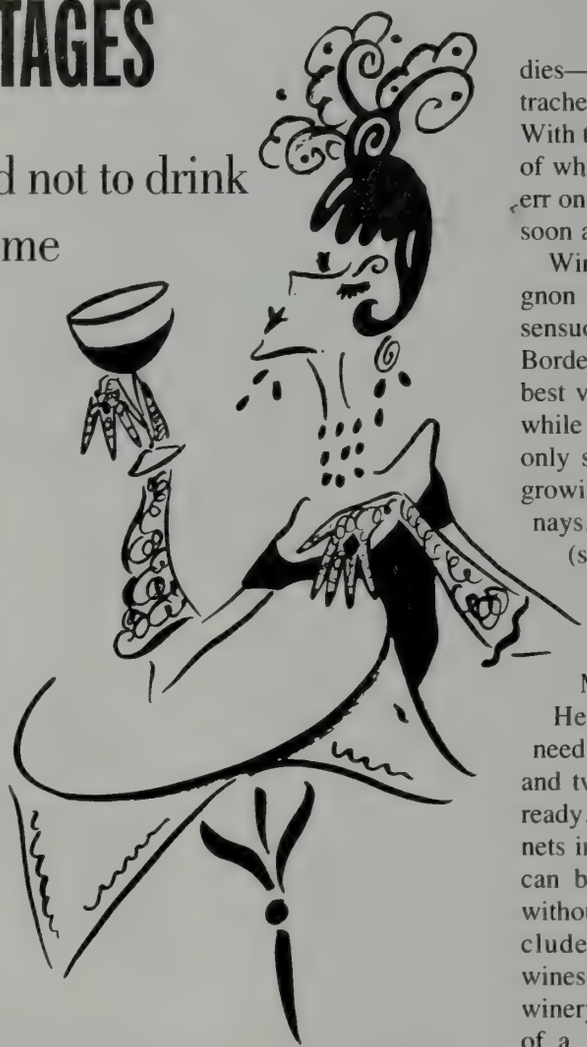
SHEILA METZNER

's a woman with AIDS she had nowhere to turn.

VINTAGE VINTAGES

How everyone can afford not to drink any wine before its time

BY JOEL L. FLEISHMAN



Over the years, at dinners and wine tastings, I have been struck again and again by the intense glow of surprised satisfaction on the faces of friends after their first tentative sips of a fully mature wine. Invariably, they thoughtfully pull the glass away from their lips and look up, radiant, to exclaim, "I had no idea that wine could taste so delicious."

Unfortunately, most sippers regularly pop open their favorite wine years before its prime, a rash act that seasoned drinkers look upon as nothing short of infanticide. The motives are all too understandable: mature wines are frequently unavailable, and wine lovers are always impatient. Only the wealthiest wineries and châteaux can afford not to cash in their entire production soon after the bottles have been corked, and even those that can are rarely willing to risk more than a fifth of their output on the hope of higher prices later. As a result, virtually all wines are rushed out within a year or two of their vintage date. Because they are at their lowest price when they are released, this is when most wine drinkers pounce. And only the most self-disciplined oenophile can resist the urge to nip at whatever is on hand, especially if there's reason to think it will be pretty tasty.

There is the further complication of pinpointing when a given wine will blossom. Not only does each variety of grape mature at its own speed, but each vintage, because of the weather of that growing season, also ages differently. Some vintages, such as 1966 in Bordeaux, are extremely slow to mature. Others, like the 1985 Bordeaux, have evolved quicker than experts predicted. Finally, there is the question of storage: bottles kept at the ideal fifty to fifty-five degrees develop more slowly than those housed in cozier temperatures.

Still, the fully ripened wine is a prize worth all the calculation, a voluptuous symphony of balanced opposites—light and dark, hot and cool, smooth and textured, sweet and acidic. So you are faced with two options. The first is to buy a vintage that has already achieved maturity—and pay ten times (or more) what the bottle initially cost. Or you can shop strategically, selecting some wine for tonight's dinner and some for a special occasion next decade. Here are a few pointers:

Among the Chardonnays, some (such as Mayacamas, Stony Hill, and Hanzell) *must* be aged to reach their optimal flavors, usually for ten years. Other great Chardonnays—Long, Forman, Chalone, Chateau Montelena, to name only four—can be enjoyed when released, but become complex and burnished after one to four years. Indeed, any well-made Chardonnay will taste richer a year or two after the vintage date. This is also true of most of the great white Burgundies—Cortons and the hyphenated Montrachets, for example—in the best years. With the lesser vintages and lesser wines of white Burgundy, it is always safer to err on the side of caution and drink them soon after release.

Wines predominantly Cabernet Sauvignon take about ten years to round into sensuous, mouth-busting ripeness. The Bordeaux generally need longer in the best vintages and the greatest châteaux, while the Californians come of age after only seven years (because of the hotter growing seasons). Like the Chardonnays, some great Cabernet-based wines (such as Château Latour and almost all of the other Bordeaux First and Super–Second Growths) and several Californians (Ridge Monte Bello, Mayacamas, and Heitz Cellars Martha's Vineyard) need to be locked away between ten and twenty years before they are really ready. Other good Bordeaux and Cabernets in all but the very weakest vintages can be stocked safely for seven years without any risk. That emphatically includes inexpensive Cabernet-based wines if they are well made by a quality winery. I still remember the lusty beauty of a '77 Beaulieu Vineyards Beautour Cabernet Sauvignon aged for seven years—bought on release for $2.99!

To give you an idea of what seductive curves your Cabernet-based wines can develop, hunt for a '75, '76, '77, '78, or '79 Napa Cabernet Sauvignon from Joseph Phelps, a '72, '74, or '75 Mayacamas, or a '79 or '81 Château Gruaud-Larose. The younger ones are still in good wineshops, and failing all else for the older, call the Joseph Phelps Vineyards at (707) 963-2745 or the Mayacamas Vineyards at (707) 224-4030.

Pinot Noir–based wines generally mature in half the time of the Cabernets, and it is risky to age even the greatest vintages longer, especially when they have not been refrigerated. Some—such as Hanzell and Chalone, and red Burgundy from Mongeard-Mugneret—are vinified to reach their peaks later and last longer. But if you open your average Pinot Noir after about five or six years, you'll experience perhaps the most amazing sweetness and delicacy it is possible to find in red wine. For a revelatory experience about the glory of a mature Pinot Noir, track down an early-to-mid-1980s Calera or Chalone. □

CHESLEY McLAREN

LIFE'S PRECIOUS GIFTS.

SWAROVSKI
SILVER CRYSTAL

Happy Jack

(Continued from page 166) he was missing it." Nicholson readily admits that late-blooming fatherhood (he claims he wants to have a brood) has had a deep—if somewhat distracting—effect. "A child is nature's only bona fide, guaranteed positive surprise," he says with awe, "which is why it gets hard to get it up for work. Now I have a new cardinal center of attention. It hits you more substantially at this age because you're not as driven. It's not that I don't relish the challenges of doing a movie, but when you're having that dumb meeting, it grates a couple of degrees more because you now think how stupid you are not to be sitting there watching your kid. You're closer to mortality. What if you died tomorrow? Would you want to say, 'I spent my last time in a casting meeting in the Valley,' or 'I went over for fifteen minutes to see her'?"

Not that Nicholson is ready to relinquish his front-row-center seat on the proverbial Hollywood dais. Quite the contrary. His salary these days is a reported $7 million a picture, against 10 percent of the gross profits. It's a figure he refuses to confirm. But Rafelson attests to Nicholson's financial clout: "Jack starts earning his money the day somebody asks him to be in a movie. The package revolves around him. He can dictate choices; power congeals around him." But, he is quick to point out, "Jack handles this very well, very politely and intelligently. There's less fuss with him than any actor I know. He started as a writer and producer, so he has great respect for all the jobs."

On the subject of salary cuts (a trend among some big-name stars who are worried about working in the more sober 1990s Hollywood), Nicholson is firm: "I never believe in it. It's always an error. . . . In fact, you've got to get a raise when you go back to work for the same person you've worked for before—whoever it is. . . . But I'm perfectly capable, and always have been, of working for nothing for the spirit of it. Besides, the minute they get the opportunity to pay me, thousands of people make money—everyone who paints me, cuts me, clothes me, dries me—they all make money. Stockholders, everybody."

Peter Guber, C.E.O. of Sony Pictures Entertainment and one of the producers of *Batman*, concurs that in the money department Nicholson is no pushover. "Jack is as difficult a deal to make as any talent deal in Hollywood. He has certain beliefs in his value that have been tested over time. [But then,] you're buying somebody who has an audience from the sixties, the seventies, the eighties, and the nineties." Ruminating on that phenomenally successful run, Nicholson admits, "I won a big lottery in life, and for that I'm eternally grateful. I believe I've spread the joy of it around as much as I could."

Nicholson, on the other hand, didn't find much joy in 1991's cinematic offerings. "I wasn't totally knocked out," he says with decided caution, a nod to his unofficial position as one of the industry's most prominent cheerleaders.

He did not, for instance, see *JFK*. "It doesn't hold much interest for me. I don't want to see the president shot again. It's not my idea of fun." As for director Oliver Stone, "I don't have any desire to work with him. I've liked the movies of his that I've seen, but he's too full of himself. I like high-spirited people, but I'm nonconfrontational."

Speaking of Hollywood's current obsession with on-screen violence, Nicholson shakes his head: "Violence is a bad habit." The industry, he fears, is losing direction, substituting brutality for art in hopes of scoring big with young audiences. "There's too much of it, but it's hard to take 'em off that jack-off. Kiss a tit, it's an X. Hack it off with a sword, PG.

"When I was making *The Two Jakes*, I'd look at these other movies and think, I'm in another language here." So, alas, did some of his critics. The generally unfavorable reviews of *The Two Jakes*, the sequel to *Chinatown* and Nicholson's third directorial effort, clearly hurt him—"more than I thought they would. The reviewers were ruthless. But then, I don't think any of the films I directed [*Drive, He Said* and *Goin' South*] got their due. Of course, I may be under a complete misapprehension about my abilities. I'm not so megalomaniacal as to think [the critics] are just being vicious, not accurate. But when they go after me, they go after me big."

If his directing is underappreciated, his acting clearly isn't. "Jack Nicholson, like the great talents of the forties—Humphrey Bogart, Cary Grant, Edward G. Robinson—has the ability to be both evil and lovable at the same moment," says Guber. "Jack's involvement with a film gives it a unique credibility. He makes it formidable by his presence."

Most younger actors, let alone a fifty-four-year-old veteran, would be happy to be in production on three movies. Still, confesses Nicholson with his usual frankness, "I hate being one of the older people in films. Fifty was the first time I paid any attention to age. God, fifty brought me crashing to my knees." He laughs. "I'm very conversant with the fear of death. I've only been aware of it for the last, oh, thirty years or so.

"But I feel better now than I did when I was fifty," he pronounces, torching up another cigarette. "It's only during this last very short period of time, inside the *Two Jakes* experience, that I started thinking about it. Interviewing the girls on that movie, I suddenly realized, I'm not going to fall for a nineteen-year-old. I'm too old for this girl. . . for all these girls. I'm not *too-old* too old, but in terms of communication, there's a difference there."

Nicholson is now pacing slowly in front of the fireplace, sucking mercilessly on the cigarette holder. Stopping, he addresses me directly. "Of course, I know I'm a couple with a woman of that age," he murmurs, as if trying to discern if art is imitating life, or life art. "But Rebecca's a precocious girl."

Does he feel the twenty-six-year age difference between Broussard and himself? He nods. "I can't think of a specific, but sometimes she'll say something and I'll say to myself, 'No, no, no, don't jump on that. It's not likely she'd understand at her age.' But I'm a vital enough person that I'm also stimulated by [the age difference]. I have respect for a fresh view."

"He's got a great lady now," says filmmaker and Nicholson intimate Henry Jaglom. "Rebecca lights up wherever she is. She's got energy, charm, delightfulness, and delightedness in life. And she loves him. You know what he said to me at my wedding? Both Rebecca and my wife were pregnant—we were eight months and she was six—they were the two big-bellied ladies there. And Jack pulled me aside and he said, 'Ain't we lucky?' He's happier now than I have ever seen him."

"Primarily," says Nicholson, "it's happiness with Rebecca and the baby, but I'm just having a good time. Took up golf. I always planned to take it up when I was fifty, because at fifty you can't play tennis, and I like learning something new all the time. So, at a very young age, I vaguely scheduled tennis at twenty-five, skiing at thirty-five, golf at fifty."

And baby at fifty-two?

"No, I didn't schedule that one." Or, for that matter, he says, the second. "I wasn't drilling for procreation."

GUCCI
EYEWEAR

Happy Jack

Nicholson can't remember the exact moment he met Broussard, although he thinks it was before she began working as a waitress at Helena's, the late-1980s Hollywood hot spot run, coincidentally, by Helena Kallianiotas, Nicholson's old friend, who occupies the second house in his Mulholland Drive compound. "Rebecca and I had mutual friends. I saw her around a lot."

Was he immediately attracted?

"Anybody would be," he answers quickly. "She's a good spirit, got a big heart, a very soulful, loving person. And—more important to men, of course—she is very beautiful."

Broussard was also a close friend of Jack's daughter Jennifer, who is the same age. "When Jennifer heard about the pregnancy, she was a little rattled, naturally," says Nicholson. "Rebecca told her. I'm not clear about whether she knew Rebecca and I were seeing each other. Anyway, Jennifer called me and we talked it out. We had a good conversation. And she talked to her mother. Her mother's great. She said, 'Well, Jennifer, you have to look at this as a blessed addition to our family. Period.' Jennifer understood immediately."

Nicholson sighs, shaking his head. "You know, I have great respect for all the women I've known—I can't recall any of them having failed me."

Rebecca Broussard grew up in Kentucky, the daughter of an engineer and his wife, who now live in Montana. After a year of college in Kentucky, she went to New York to study hairdressing, hooked into modeling, and eventually moved to Hollywood to try acting. In 1987 she married record producer Richard Perry, a marriage that lasted less than two years. Somewhere during this time—and Nicholson is understandably vague about this, as he was still, officially, seeing Huston—the two got together. Though Broussard appeared as Nicholson's secretary in *The Two Jakes,* her acting ambitions seem to have been quelled with the advent of motherhood.

In fact, Nicholson says he doesn't know what Broussard wants. "I think she wanted to be a mother. And she's a real mom," he says, his voice tinged with pride. "She doesn't want to be away from Lorraine more than three minutes. I think they've only been apart for twenty-four hours. She's very strong, this woman. I don't even know what she wants—that's how strong she is. She's really an old-fashioned gal. Obviously, she couldn't be living this particular thing out with me if she was ritualistically old-fashioned. But...she's a babe. She's got her own mind." He pauses, looking over to the other side of the room. "She's what I like," he finally says. "She's wild."

In terms of...?

"Everything. Just, she's wild. Wild's *it.*"

In Hollywood, fatherhood has become the drug of choice. Everybody's doing it. Besides Nicholson, there's that newest Pop-on-the-Block, Warren Beatty. Though the two are in touch, Nicholson has seen his fellow boulevardier only "probably a dozen times in two years. We talk, I know what he's up to, but I haven't called him since he called me from the hospital. What did he say? He just told me he had an eight-pound-eleven-ounce, beautiful—extremely beautiful—baby girl. He had that glowing, happy sound to him."

Does he expect Warren to be an involved father? "Oh, man. Definitely. Hey, this guy might never do anything else again. That's the way he gets involved in everything. Baby, I ain't heard from him in two weeks!"

As for the details of Beatty's relationship with Annette Bening, Nicholson remains discreet. "I've had an in-depth conversation with Warren, but I'm not about to say much. Only, it's all to the good. I don't think he's opposed to marriage. But, jeez, I'm the last person to ask that kind of thing. I don't even have a policy myself."

He'll go as far as to say that he and Broussard have "a real commitment." But, for the moment at least, that does not extend to marriage. "I'd certainly do it for the children's sake, if that were the real issue. But that's not up yet. I don't discuss marriage much with Rebecca. Those discussions are the very thing I'm trying to avoid. I'm after this immediate, real thing. That's all I believe in. I want to do the right thing, and when it's clear, I'll know exactly what to do."

And if Rebecca said, "Jack, I want to get married"?

"I couldn't answer that now."

Besides, Nicholson would rather talk about kids. "They're not afraid of death, which is what conditions our thinking," he opines. "Once they are, you're dealing with a full-scale, neurotic human being, like the rest of us. They're a tremendous boon to your life. If you don't do a goddamn thing but stand there and look at your kid, it takes you up, way up. Look, having a baby is very big. You don't want to make people envious or anything, but it overwhelms. Everything else is peanuts."

So God has smiled on Jack Nicholson, huh? "I don't believe in God now," says Nicholson, who as a child sought out Catholicism on his own. "But it's the only official dogma training I've had. I liked it. It's a smart religion. I can still work up an envy for someone who has a faith. I can see how that could be a deeply soothing existence."

There are other reasons for Nicholson's current contentment, says Devlin, the godfather to Lorraine: "It's mainly Rebecca and the baby, but also, for the first time, he's truly comfortable with his stardom and his place in history. He's relaxed into his life."

"I've had two of the happiest years I've ever had," he confirms. Have domestic pleasures clipped his wings? "There's lots of things about the world of Hollywood that aren't as interesting to me as they once were," he ventures. For one thing, he is pickier about his hobnobbing. "I'm still a supporter of the film industry, I worry for it, I love it. But I don't go out as much as I used to. Most of the movies I see I see at Bobby's [producer Robert Evans's] or Warren's. I haven't been to ten parties in L.A. in two years. I'm almost reclusive, although I do play golf and I see 15,000 people at a basketball game, so, semantically, I don't qualify as a recluse. But in my own terms I am."

One of the things that Nicholson appreciates about Broussard is her relative indifference to public life. "She's young, so there was that initial ego placement. Once she made sure she wasn't being hidden, she didn't care that much—which I love because I *never* cared for it that much. If Rebecca wants to have fun, she goes out on her own. When I go out to a party, she's the first woman I've been with who's not worrying about what I'm doing."

So Broussard is not jealous?

"Oh, yeah. God, yeah. Breathtakingly powerful, her emotions. But she's something else too. She's...cool, you know? Relaxed. She believes in me."

"If Rebecca goes by Jack's way of thinking," surmises Devlin, "they'll have a fabulous life together, insanely interesting, filled with children, friends, money. But if any woman attempts to tame Jack in a way he doesn't want to be tamed, it simply won't work. Jack's in a place in life where he really wants to be good and is good, but he doesn't want to do it on terms that are unacceptable to him. You can't play the game of life with Jack and play it too conventionally."

V2
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Happy Jack

Nicholson's newfound happiness did not come without a price. And a rather public one at that. Since he was still officially seeing Huston when Broussard became pregnant, Nicholson found himself in a delicate position, to say the least. It was a painful, difficult period for the actor. There was a moment when he felt he could salvage and, indeed, maintain both relationships. (This is the man who in his senior year in high school was voted class pessimist *and* optimist.)

In his eyes, he and Anjelica were "eternal." For "lack of a better cliché," he once referred to them as "Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir." Nicholson was more accurate than he realized, since, friends say, their relationship was indeed infused with an existential gloom. "There was a prevailing sense of hopelessness about it, always," comments Rafelson of the Nicholson-Huston love affair.

What exactly happened remains between the two of them. Nicholson, certainly, is reluctant to talk about it. "I'm under her imprimatur not to discuss her," he says slowly. "I don't necessarily agree with that. I thought I had enough editorial sense to talk around these things in a way that was good for everybody."

Their friends believe that a number of factors contributed to the breakup. For starters, there was Huston's determination to have a big-time career. Nicholson admits that for him this presented a complication: "If someone has the desire to do this profession, you're not doing them a service by resisting. But certainly anyone who has ever been intimate with me understands"—he pauses, choosing his words carefully—"that being an actress does not make that relationship easier. I encourage acting because it's been so very good to me. But my hope is that the roulette wheel would stop somewhere else."

Huston has implied in interviews that she feels her relationship with Nicholson impeded her own career. It's an allegation that pains Nicholson. "I don't think she wanted to create that impression, but it's come to be the accepted reality. I was only supportive and helpful," he says, defending himself, "the only one in her life to send her to acting classes. I did, after all, get her her first significant parts [*The Postman Always Rings Twice* and *Prizzi's Honor*] and advised her on her career—as I would any friend. I know that when you teach somebody to drive, or give them a car, you give them wings. They may fly. That's part of the danger of life."

Beyond the professional issues, there were the more important, personal ones. Nicholson and Huston both wanted children, but did not have one together. Then Broussard got pregnant, and Nicholson, who doesn't believe in abortion, stood by her. This incontrovertible proof of his infidelity seemed to have brought things to a head for Huston. Nicholson told me two years ago that it was he who broke the news of Broussard's pregnancy to Huston, "first and in person." Her reaction, he said, "wasn't excessively jagged or negative. She's rather like me. Where there's clarity, there is no choice. Where there's choice, there's misery. The fragility of an infant's skull reduces all this talk to gibberish. There was nothing else I could do but what I did."

But when reality set in, Huston's reasonableness apparently vanished.

As Nicholson also told me in 1990, Huston showed up unexpectedly one afternoon at his Paramount office—where he was working on *The Two Jakes*—and proceeded to pummel him. "Yeah, I probably deserved it," Nicholson now says in measured tones about that incident. "Let's say I owed it to her, if not deserved it."

"Jack's proud of Rebecca," comments producer Harry Gittes, who has known Nicholson for more than twenty-five years. "Of course he misses Anjelica, though she seems extremely happy now."

"I *am* totally happy for Anjelica," Nicholson concludes with great deliberateness.

As he should be. In the two years since they split up, Huston has wowed critics with her performances in *Enemies: A Love Story* and Woody Allen's *Crimes and Misdemeanors* (both 1989), received an Oscar nomination for her role in *The Grifters* (1990), and last year proved her box-office clout starring in *The Addams Family*. As for her personal life, she is set to marry noted L.A. sculptor Robert Graham, with whom she says she wants to start a family. As Nicholson points out, "Things are going great for Anjelica."

The day Lorraine Nicholson was born, April 16, 1990, her father spent the day hanging out with Don Devlin. They went to a Laker game, stopped off at Robert Evans's to watch a movie, and came back to Mulholland Drive. "Don and I were sitting here and Rebecca came downstairs and said, 'I think it's time.' I said, 'Oh, really? Well, let's get the bag together.' "

It wasn't his first trip to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. Nicholson had cased the place weeks before. "I scouted it out, found the exits, where I could smoke, whatever. I always check out buildings ahead of time, including the venue for the Academy Awards. It's best for everybody if I move correctly. As a result, this is one area in my life where I have a better time than the average person. I'm not locked in the traffic jam, going up the wrong aisle, or coming in the wrong door." Still, Mr. Cool and Collected admits that all the planning in the world can't control the subconscious. Speaking of the imminent arrival of baby No. 2, Nicholson chuckles: "I keep having dreams that I jump in the car and turn directly right—into my wall."

Nicholson clearly relishes reliving Lorraine's birth. "The night before, the halls were filled with people having babies, but ours was the only baby born at Cedars that night. The only one. We had everybody helping us and a beautiful room and the clouds—she came at dawn. Only four hours of labor."

When the baby slithered out, Nicholson was there to catch her. As his brand-new daughter wriggled in his hands, he held her up, looked at the doctors, flashed that killer grin, and announced, "She's rich too."

Nicholson laughs heartily as he recounts the story. His reverence for the birth process is sentimental and touching. Though most nineties dads take Lamaze and show up in the delivery room, as did Nicholson, very few have "experienced my own birth psychedelically," as Nicholson happily points out he did years ago while taking LSD. "So I knew this could be big."

It was. "So I'm there, cutting the umbilical cord, and suddenly I saw this human being. She was *all* there. Her eyebrows shot up inside ten seconds, she looked over at me, and went like this"—Nicholson's own whirligig brows are flirting dangerously with his hairline.

"Then I take her from the birthing room to get her shot," he continues enthusiastically. "She gets the shot and the whole organism turns red, like that," he says, snapping his fingers in the air. "The minute the shot is over, she stopped crying. And there wasn't another sound. And I thought, What a lucky person. She is not going to live within her own pain. She's going to feel it, hate it, and be done with it. What a great thing, not to be the nurturer of your own pain."

For the first month or so after Lorraine's birth, Nicholson stayed with her and Rebecca at their house. "You really want to be there; everything is happening. It certainly wouldn't be called hardship because I enjoyed it, but it was rough in terms of habits. You wouldn't live the way I do if you didn't like being in your

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Happy Jack

own head. But Lorraine and Rebecca come here and stay a lot. I got their stuff all over. I moved everything up.'' He makes a sweeping gesture toward his living room, whose nearly empty tabletops support his claim of childproofing.

''Jack has never been an asshole,'' discourses Henry Jaglom. ''Male movie stars are magnifiers of ordinary men. So if men are assholes, movie-star men are bigger assholes. But Jack's not afraid of his emotional side. Jack isn't scared of women. He's the most unthreatened male I know.''

The genesis of Nicholson's ease with the opposite sex traces back to Neptune, New Jersey, and a triumvirate of strong women. Nicholson's mother, Ethel May, and her two daughters, Lorraine and June, fifteen and seventeen years Jack's seniors, reared him in the beauty shop Ethel May operated out of their apartment. Nicholson's father was said to be an alcoholic who flew the coop early in the game. It would be years later, when he was thirty-seven, during the filming of *The Fortune*, that Nicholson would discover the bizarre truth of his lineage: that the woman he thought to be his mother was his grandmother, and that his birth mother was his ''sister'' June, whose out-of-wedlock pregnancy produced the baby boy Ethel raised as her own.

''My only emotion is gratitude, literally, for my life,'' Nicholson once said to me. ''If June and Ethel had been of less character, I would never have gotten to live. These women gave me the gift of life.''

They also instilled in him the belief that the best way to treat a lady is ''like a gent.'' It's a hard-and-fast rule for the man who feels ''the world is moving toward an electronic, Draconian attack on communication between the genders.... It's one of the very few things I have no doubts about. Even in the worst of circumstances, I'm anxiously driven to be central and truthful. I'm not a manipulative person.'' Is he easily manipulated himself? Nicholson shrugs. ''I'm a soft touch. You can pull my string. I'm not driven to dominate.''

Today, in light of his own preoccupation with family, the conditions of his childhood seem to him even more awe-inspiring. ''It was a real feat June accomplished,'' he says, acknowledging the emotional burden such a secret wrought on the whole family. Hesitating, he laughs. ''I can imagine that at times of high conflict June was dying to say to me, 'Do it because I'm your mother, you prick.' ''

At the time Nicholson learned the truth—he was told by a *Time*-magazine researcher working on an August 1974 cover story on the actor—only his ''sister'' Lorraine was alive to confirm it. Now, Nicholson says, he understands what seemed to him at the time to be June's overconcern about what he was going to do with his life. ''Once, I didn't speak to June for a year or so. She thought I was wasting my time on the theatrical profession, that I was lazy, a bum, wasn't trying, and that I should take my very fine mind and put it into a profession. She thought I'd had enough time to experiment, that all I was interested in was running around, getting high, and pussy. Naturally, I strongly disagreed with her.''

Jack Nicholson does not know—and has never sought out—his father. ''I'm not overly curious. I've always said I had the most fortunate rearing. No one would've had the courage to design it that way, but it was ideal. No repression from a male father figure, no Oedipal competition.''

''Basketball,'' says Nicholson in a tone that invites no argument, ''is the smartest game.'' For years, he has been the Lakers' most famous fan, the hooting, yelling superstar with seats on the court, the guy the TV cameras focused on almost as much as they did on Magic.

When Nicholson heard that Magic Johnson had tested positive for H.I.V., he was working on *Man Trouble*, and when the subject comes up today, a look of profound despair crosses his face. ''I was stunned, brokenhearted. Still am.'' Nicholson says he immediately called Johnson to give support. And if he calls again he's not going to ask how Magic feels. ''When you're sick you don't want people asking how you are every eleven seconds. I'll just say, 'Let's go play golf.' I feel very close to him. I always have, even though we've actually gone one-on-one very little. He asked me to write the foreword to his book.''

Clearly agitated, Nicholson reaches for another cigarette. ''We all love this fellow. He *is* magic. He was twenty when he came here. I've watched him evolve. Here's a guy who can deal with everything. I've got friends who've sent their children to his basketball camps and they're astounded—he's tough on kids. They do anything wrong and they're down doing push-ups.''

The topic of AIDS and its bearing on sexual mores clearly infuriates Nicholson. As he talks, his rage builds. Did the specter of AIDS slow Nicholson down? ''Of course. It slowed everybody down,'' he rails. ''But you can't get AIDS jerking off in the bathroom. Do you know how quickly this is going to escalate into there being no such thing as 'safe sex'? They've ruined one entire generation. Anyone twenty-five years old today has never lived a sensible sexual life. They've been conditioned by fear of herpes, AIDS, and death. Death! 'If you fuck, you die.' And there's no going back. We're in the middle of a total, life-annihilating, anti-sexuality fear of freedom and pleasure. And that is costly.''

For Nicholson, it is only a short mental leap from sex to drugs. He's fired up, the words pouring out of him almost in a stream of consciousness. ''There are people dying because America lies about drugs. But how many more drug-related homicides will it take before they do something about it? Drugs are no longer just in the cities. They're in Toledo.'' The answer, says Nicholson, is to legalize drugs—all of them. ''Heroin, cocaine. Put the same logical restraints on them as on other things. Penalize abuses. We're losing one child out of ten because they insist on keeping drugs illegal and creating a drug business.''

But Jack's not stopping there. It's on to politics. The presidential election? ''Bush's coffin would've been elected president in the next election—except TV needs a horse race to fill up the time. But then he vomited. Well, I'd like for the election not to be decided on that. We all vomit.''

Pausing to catch his breath, Nicholson jumps up and begins pacing. ''Now, mind you, this man is a political opponent of mine. I'm a Democrat. But I'm not comfortable living in a world where a man could be unseated because he got the stomach flu in Japan. I'd rather we read chicken livers [to determine the race].''

Back to sex. ''Don't you think Gary Hart would be the best candidate to run against Bush?'' argues Nicholson, who was a prominent Hart supporter and fund-raiser. ''And why isn't he here? Because he fucks, that's why. Baby, they can say all they want, but that's the facts. And we're paying for it. If someone likes to fuck, leave them alone. They're deciding elections based on someone vomiting. They're picking the Democratic candidate based on whether or not he got nooky. You put these considerations up against annihilation, the rain forest, pollution, aerosol cans, automobiles, and the econo

ANDREW FEZZA
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Happy Jack

my! I heard Walter Cronkite say once, 'Civilizations only fall for one reason—they made a *series* of bad decisions.' "

It is now dark atop Mulholland Drive. In the kitchen, a cook chops vegetables. In the living room, Nicholson walks to each priceless piece of art and flicks on specially designed lighting. The room is bathed in illumination.

As he circles the room, the two-time Academy Award–winning actor talks about The End. "For the first time in my work, there are lots of parts I simply couldn't play because I'm too old," he says thoughtfully. "I've always had a big conflict about how much acting I am going to do. I like it, but it's all-consuming, more than most jobs. I work more than anybody. But now I'm thinking, Work less—or don't work at all."

Jack Nicholson leaving the business? Retiring his sunglasses? A movie world without George Hanson, Billy Buddusky, Jake Gittes, R. P. McMurphy, Jack Torrance, Darryl Van Horne, the Joker?

"I won't go on working just in order to work," he ruminates. "It wouldn't be like I'm *retired*. It would just be. . . a kind of fade-out." He smiles.

"I would look at it as an idyllic existence if someone said, 'Well, you're going to live to be eighty-five, you're going to make only three trips to New York, you'll do a couple of things here or there, and the rest of the time you'll be living here on Mulholland, doing pretty much what you're doing now.' I'd look at it as a great existence because I am having a good time. There's nothing I want, no certain thing I'm waiting to do. I've administered myself into a little more work than I think is sensible, but other than that I'm going great guns.

"In every area," he says, flashing the mischievous look that practically provokes the next question.

Well, how about it? How about sexually? Is he still the man his friend Gittes describes as "a sexual animal"?

Nicholson grins again. "I feel exactly the same as I've always felt."

Which is?

Nicholson leans back, gives me that cat-that-ate-the-canary smile, and purrs:

"A lightly reined-in voracious beast." □

A Cool Mellon

(Continued from page 196) accent that sounds English to most American ears, the telltale jargon of the confirmed analysand pops up everywhere in Paul Mellon's speech. Indeed, his extensive and enthusiastic experiences with psychotherapy are one of the most unexpected aspects of a life that otherwise seems anachronistically like that of an eighteenth-century country gentleman.

Nonetheless, it was no Whig diarist who inspired Mellon during this lengthy and sometimes painful project. "In both modes of analysis [the Freudian and the Jungian], I kept repeating a great deal of my life anyway," he recalls. "In a way, my analyst, Dr. Jenny Waelder-Hall, encouraged me to do the autobiography. I remember my talking to her about it in analysis and saying that I found it hard because I'd get bogged down in the details. And she always said, 'Well, don't do it that way. Do it just with vignettes, because those are the interesting things anyhow.' "

But as much of a departure as Mellon's interest in psychiatry may seem, it does not come as a great surprise, even in the unintrospective equestrian world. "It was obvious he was rather mixed up at one time," says the Duke of Beaufort. "He was so apologetic. He certainly had some worries about something. I couldn't quite make out what. . . but he'd sort of apologize for being there, practically."

One of the very few things Mellon admits he would have done differently in his life is to have seen a therapist at an earlier age. "I've always regretted that when I was at Yale I didn't know about the psychiatric part of the health department," Mellon now says. "It's too bad, because maybe if I'd been able as a sophomore or a junior to have had a little guidance, I might have felt much better much sooner."

Nevertheless, Mellon's unusually self-effacing nature, regardless of its psychic origins, has enabled him to get on with all kinds of people, something even the well-adjusted rich cannot always manage with ease. He has been equally successful among horse grooms and museum curators, foundation functionaries and world-class architects, army buddies and members of the British aristocracy. Above all, Paul Mellon is no snob, a fact that can be discerned by those who are able to spot one a mile off.

His contacts with the House of Windsor, unlike those of other millionaires who pursue the royal family for social advancement, have been grounded in mutual sporting interests. During her first state visit to the U.S., in 1957, Queen Elizabeth took a break from her official duties in Washington to have tea with the Mellons at their farm fifty-five miles west of the capital and look over their training track. Mellon has been invited to Kentucky for dinner several times during the Queen's visits, when she inspects new bloodstock for her stables, and he still plans his three or four trips a year to England "depending on what the horses are doing," which has often been quite a bit. In 1971 his horse Mill Reef won the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Stakes at Ascot. The Queen Mother, for whom the race is named, made an impulsive visit to the winner's circle to tell the delighted owner, "I simply had to come whizzing down to congratulate you on that wonderful little horse." And last spring the Queen Mother and Mellon were given honorary degrees from the Royal Veterinary College of the University of London, presented to them by Princess Anne, the university chancellor.

On occasion, the Queen herself has sought Mellon's advice. As he tells it, "The Queen also trains with my trainer, Ian Balding. When I had Mill Reef, her former trainer, Peter Hastings-Bass, was very ill with cancer and had to get Ian, who was only twenty-five, to help him. I was asked to go to the Royal Box at Ascot for some of the races and for tea, and the Queen asked me whether Ian ought to keep on as head trainer or not. I said he should, and she said that was what she thought, too."

During the Prince and Princess of Wales's 1985 trip to Washington, the Mellons gave a Sunday lunch at Oak Spring, their Virginia house, with a guest list that included Caroline Kennedy, Charles Ryskamp (now director of New York's Frick Collection), and J. Carter Brown (director of the National Gallery of Art, who in January announced his retirement). Prince Charles came away raving about the art collection and library—including paintings by George Stubbs and illuminated books by William Blake—claiming it was the best-displayed collection he'd ever seen. "I'm glad to hear that," Mellon says with characteristic modesty. "He got along with Bunny very well, because

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A Cool Mellon

he's interested in gardening and books and flowers. He's a very nice man."

Paul Mellon's love of horses and Bunny Mellon's love of horticulture—she is one of the most respected plantswomen in the U.S.—have cemented their friendship with America's equivalent of royalty, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. "She's a very good rider, very, very good," says Mellon. "She really loves it. She used to hunt with us quite a bit when the president was alive. . . . She has two horses with us now, and a little house near Middleburg that she uses when she comes down to ride."

For more than thirty years Bunny Mellon has been one of Jackie's most devoted friends and her virtual court gardener. At President Kennedy's request, Bunny Mellon transformed the White House Rose Garden, next to the Oval Office, into a dazzling outdoor reception room befitting the chief executive. She was a munificent member of Jackie's White House restoration committee. After J.F.K.'s assassination, his widow asked Mrs. Mellon to arrange the flowers at the Capitol, St. Matthew's Cathedral, and Arlington National Cemetery, and to place a basket of flowers from the Rose Garden at his grave. And in 1968, Mrs. Mellon accompanied Mrs. Kennedy to Atlanta for Martin Luther King Jr.'s funeral. Interestingly, although a lifetime Republican, Paul Mellon has never been closer with a First Family than he was with the Democratic Kennedys.

Bunny Mellon (who uses her full name, Rachel Lambert Mellon, only professionally) did much to soften the starkness of the John F. Kennedy Library's harborfront site in Boston. As the building's architect, I. M. Pei, recalls, "Bunny was asked by Jackie to come and look at it and said, 'Jack loved the dunes. We've *got* to bring some of the dunes here.' And we said, 'How can you bring the dunes there?' It was all muck, no sand, nothing there. . . . We were building on man-made land, and it's very difficult to make it look natural. 'No, no,' Bunny said. 'Never mind. We'll try.' And she brought her own men, and I tell you, in a matter of months it became a dune. But at what effort, my gosh! We had to plant the seedlings of the dune grass just like the way people transplant hair. That's the perfectionist in her."

Although as soft-spoken as her husband, Bunny Mellon is described by those who know her as far more prone to control. "She desperately needs her court and total fidelity," says one New York socialite. "Once she takes a shine to you, she's terribly, terribly nice and thoughtful and gives presents. But it's sort of cannibalistic. Unless you're careful, she'd like to buy you and have you as her personal liege man. You just have to get out at a certain point."

That is a recourse that few of her close friends have taken, however. Her generosity is staggering: the loan of the couple's private jet; baubles by her favorite jeweler, the late Jean Schlumberger; furniture (a $17,000 bed for Jackie Onassis, according to Kitty Kelley's *Jackie Oh!*); and even suits (several a year from Huntsman for a British peer). Just before Christmas not long ago, Mrs. Mellon was seen going from her chauffeur-driven station wagon to the door of her New York house, wearing a tan raincoat and her signature boating cap with the brim turned down, laden with dozens of small blue shopping bags from Tiffany.

Her employees are no less subject to her attentions. "She tries to make slaves of craftsmen," says one New York antiques consultant. "There were these two boys who did everything for her. She wouldn't travel without them, and they were always set to work, putting fifteen coats of lacquer on the front door and then sanding them down until they finally got the exquisite darkness and smoothness of *verte cyprée* and were then allowed to put fifteen coats of lacquer back on."

This, after all, is the woman who upon the retirement of her favorite designer, Balenciaga, was introduced by the old master to Hubert de Givenchy, to carry on her tradition of wearing haute couture. (Givenchy has since become one of her closest friends, and she has designed his gardens in France.) Though not a clotheshorse, she does care greatly about her looks for big events. "She wears her uniforms of skirts and sweaters," one good friend reports, "and then she'll have a breathtakingly lovely, very simple Givenchy ball dress with a great necklace for some occasion."

Although clearly devoted to each other, the Mellons pursue largely independent schedules, often using their twenty-two-year-old Gulfstream II to jet around on short notice. "It has nice little Ben Nicholsons and things in it," says one frequent passenger. "And it's very simple: pale gray with navy tweed upholstery. They use it a great, great deal, you know, because there're so many houses." Even in Antigua, Mrs. Mellon's attention to detail never falters. The late decorator Billy Baldwin recalled "a slat house adjoining the dining room where she kept, along with her orchids and seedlings, three tree toads that serenaded us all evening long."

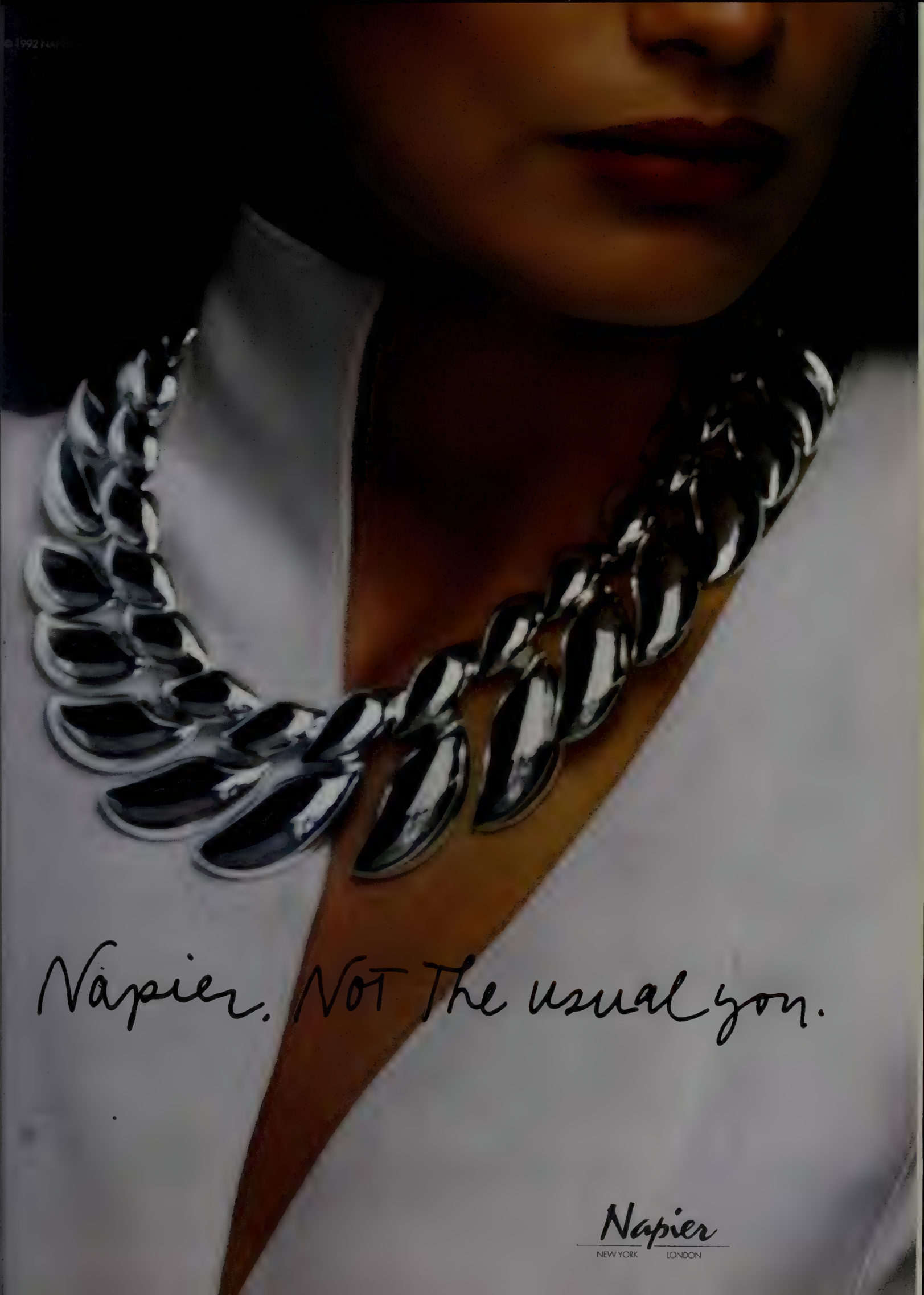
This is the second marriage for both Paul and Bunny Mellon, and each gives the other considerable latitude. Bunny Mellon is independently rich: her grandfather invented Listerine, still made by Warner-Lambert pharmaceuticals. She remains on friendly terms with her first husband, Stacy Lloyd Jr., and has taken the Gulfstream to see him in St. Croix during the Mellons' sojourns in Antigua, where he has also been a guest. In fact, Lloyd was a friend of Paul Mellon's before Bunny left one for the other, and the lifelong connections within the Mellons' small circle are one reason it remains impervious to outsiders.

"To me, it's old home week," says one longtime friend who often stays with the Mellons. "What it is to me is the familiar thing, which I think applies to that whole world. There were three or four schools that we all went to and three or four colleges. And the sons were put into the brokerage firms and everybody knew everybody. It was a tiny, tiny world that went from Philadelphia to Boston, and all intermarried."

Paul Mellon's father was born just outside that orbit, in western Pennsylvania, but he ranged much farther from it in his choice of a wife. Andrew Mellon was the son of Judge Thomas Mellon, an Ulster Presbyterian immigrant who left the judiciary in 1870 to found T. Mellon & Sons (the forerunner of the Mellon Bank), bedrock of the family fortune. Andrew Mellon was still unmarried at age forty-three, when he made a transatlantic crossing with one of his closest business partners, the coke baron and art collector Henry Clay Frick. It was on that fateful voyage that Mellon met Nora McMullen, the beautiful but spoiled youngest child and only daughter of a Hertfordshire beer baron, whose McMullen brews are still made there.

It was love at first sight for the dour businessman, but considerably less for the flighty nineteen-year-old. She rejected the marriage proposal of the fabulously rich American, but her father, a man of considerable ambitions—he rented Hertford Castle as his family home from the Marquess of Salisbury—apparently prevailed upon her to accept. It turned out to be a big mistake.

After their wedding reception on the grounds of Hertford Castle, the couple returned to Pittsburgh, seat of the Mellon millions but a factory town of appalling gloominess, much like the grim, business-like personality of the tycoon himself. When she got the chance, Nora Mellon fled home to England. On a voyage back to the U.S. in 1902, she met a London


Napier. Not the usual son.
Napier
NEW YORK LONDON

A Cool Mellon

layabout named Alfred Curphey, with whom she began an incredibly indiscreet ten-year affair financed with funds unknowingly supplied by the unsuspecting, cuckolded husband.

The Mellons had two children—Ailsa, born in 1901, and Paul, born in 1907—but Nora's maternal duties did little to deter her pursuit of romantic excitement. Glancing toward his mother's sepia photograph on a desk in his Washington library, Paul Mellon wistfully says, "I noticed several times when Mother left to go to England just before Christmas, or not being here on my birthday or Ailsa's birthday. It just seemed odd to me. You would have thought she'd stay for Christmas, regardless of what the situation was."

In 1904, Nora Mellon finally disclosed the liaison, and her startled husband paid Curphey to withdraw. The bounder cheerfully took Mellon's check, but the lovers resumed their romance surreptitiously not long afterward. During the interim, however, the Mellons reconciled long enough to conceive Paul, who was born in Pittsburgh and christened at St. George's Chapel at Windsor Castle on his first trip to England, at the age of six months. (Mellon is convinced that that rare ceremony in the royal-family church presaged his lifelong Anglophilia. Indeed, at the time, his parents were renting Sunninghill Park, later intended as the home of the then Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip and on the site of the Duke and Duchess of York's new house.)

But soon after Paul's birth, relations between his parents began to unravel for good. Determined to have it all—lover, money, and children—Nora Mellon asked for a divorce and preyed on her husband's morbid fear of notoriety by threatening to go public with her distorted version of events. And she tried to disgrace him further: a medicine bottle was allegedly removed from Mellon's bathroom cabinet, and it was implied that he used it to treat a venereal disease.

Finally, Andrew Mellon ceased being a pushover. The marital strife was having obviously harmful effects on their impressionable children—Paul began to suffer from a variety of psychosomatic complaints. Mellon sprang into action at last and launched legal steps to prevent Nora from taking them back to England with her. The Mellon house in Pittsburgh, with "watchers" hired by both husband and wife to monitor each other's movements, came to resemble an armed camp. Eventually a court-appointed guardian took the children to live in another house to escape the tension, but that embarrassing move increased their shyness among their inquisitive friends.

Soon things quickly went from bad to worse. Hitting her husband where it hurt most, Nora told her side of the story in excruciatingly melodramatic detail to a Philadelphia paper and had copies distributed in Pittsburgh (where, she suspected, the powerful Mellon would be able to quash reports in the local press). He in turn used his political influence to change the state's divorce laws to his advantage, giving the court discretion to deny her a trial by jury, a move which backfired when Mellon was denounced for subverting his wife's right to due process. Then, all at once, it was over: a compromise was reached without a jury trial, and in 1912 the mismatched couple at last received their divorce, sharing custody of the children.

Well provided for in the settlement—she got about $1.25 million, then a fortune, though only a small percentage of Mellon's wealth—Nora Mellon soon parted from her British beau. She eventually remarried, but not before Andrew Mellon, amazingly, asked her to marry him again, in 1923, while he was secretary of the Treasury under President Warren G. Harding (a post he would retain under presidents Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover, becoming the third-longest-serving Treasury secretary in U.S. history). She sensibly declined, and lived on until 1974, just short of her ninety-fifth birthday.

Mellon betrays little rancor toward his mother, but little fondness either. The Mellon divorce scandal occurred at a time when even a quiet split ensured certain social death, and the emotional scars it left on the Mellon children lasted a lifetime. Paul Mellon believes the divorce made Ailsa (who married and then divorced the diplomat David Bruce) more withdrawn and led to her later reclusiveness and hypochondria. ("She was a poor little rich girl who aged badly," says a former art dealer who knew her from her days as a major collector of Impressionist paintings.) Paul Mellon clearly sided with his father emotionally; his last words on his mother are "We were friends, with a certain amount of affection between us, although I would not call it love."

He did, however, seek the love of his caring but remote father, and constantly believed himself unable to please the glacial old man—fifty-two years the boy's senior. "I felt I'd never measure up to him in the ways he would have liked me to measure up," Mellon now says with his characteristic candor. "And I think that was kind of a shadow that I was under for a long time."

There is no doubt that in his fashion Andrew Mellon loved his son: soon after Paul graduated from Yale, in 1929, the tycoon transferred enough stocks to make Paul rich in his own right. But he could not fathom some of Paul's greatest enthusiasms, often telling him, "Any damn fool knows that one horse can run faster than another."

After receiving his Yale degree, the young Mellon went on to read English history at Clare College, Cambridge, one of the happiest periods of his life. His half-English parentage made him aware of what to expect, unlike many of his countrymen. "I knew the English character enough to know that I wasn't going to be flooded with invitations and that people would be a little standoffish," he says, breaking into a smile that makes his face look uncannily like Ronald Reagan's. "And that didn't bother me at all. As it turned out, I found that it was perfectly easy to get along with the people I was closest to, like the people I rode with."

There were also nights danced away at London's fashionable Café de Paris, and a further plus came in 1932 when Andrew Mellon was named American ambassador to the Court of St. James's. But the inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt as president early in 1933 put an end to that English idyll. The Republican ambassador was replaced by a Democrat, and back in the U.S. another dark cloud descended over Andrew Mellon. In March 1934 he was accused of fraud on his 1931 income tax return, and the government announced it was seeking more than $3 million in back taxes and penalties.

"It was a very bad time for all of us," says Mellon as he looks up at the dashing 1924 Sir William Orpen oil portrait of his father over the library chimneypiece. "Mostly for my father," he adds slowly, "but there's also a certain stigma if it's a tax case."

Furthermore, Andrew Mellon was the most reviled man in America after Herbert Hoover during the Great Depression. As Paul Mellon now recalls, "I remember about 1930 driving back from Washington to Pittsburgh and I stopped at this garage. And on the wall there was a placard that said, HOOVER BLEW THE WHISTLE, MELLON RANG THE BELL, WALL STREET GAVE THE SIGNAL, AND THE COUNTRY WENT TO HELL." He pauses for a second to chuckle, and his collector's instinct surfaces. "I don't know why I didn't buy that from the man."

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At the time, though, the taunt could not have seemed so amusing. Still, when the fraud charges were brought before a grand jury, it refused to return an indictment. As Mellon now notes, "It always surprised me that in the middle of the Depression a group of workers would have seen so clearly that there wasn't fraud. You would have thought for reasons of revenge that they would have sided with the government. It seemed to me that that was such a clear vindication of my father, and an indication that people knew unconsciously that it was a political move on Roosevelt's part. Nobody's ever been able to say that Roosevelt actually instigated it, but I can't imagine that [Secretary of the Treasury Henry] Morgenthau and the rest of them would have been so eager about it if Roosevelt hadn't been behind it."

Roosevelt biographer Arthur Schlesinger Jr. agrees only in that there is no proof of a vendetta. "Robert H. Jackson, Henry Morgenthau, Jr., and Homer Cummings were all men of honor," he wrote in reply to a request for a comment for this article, "nor do I know of any evidence that FDR had any personal animus toward Mellon." The civil case dragged on for several years and was resolved only after Mellon's death in 1937, when a final tax assessment of almost half a million dollars was levied by the government, but all fraud penalties were thrown out.

For a few years before and after his father died Paul Mellon made a half-hearted attempt to assume Andrew Mellon's role as the head of a diversified business empire, but that is the one world that has always bored him stiff. While still in his thirties he gave it all up—a high position in the Mellon Bank and directorships of family-controlled firms, including Carborundum, Gulf Oil, and Pittsburgh Coal—to pursue a life of gentlemanly pleasures he was sure his father would have frowned on.

In 1935 he married Mary Conover Brown, a Kansas City–born divorcée, and together they discovered one of Mellon's abiding interests and the salvation of his personal happiness: psychiatry. Paul Mellon is now a very happy man, but that contentment has sometimes been misunderstood as the result of his great riches. The Duke of Beaufort remembers one night when Mellon was having dinner at the Duke's house in the country. "A friend of mine and his, Jeremy Tree, who's a horse trainer, was also there. Paul Mellon was [illegible] here Beaufort slips into a nasal American twang—" 'Waal, in life I somehow think the bad things seem to equal out with the good.' And Jeremy said, 'Well, certainly have in *your* life, I must say.' "

But in fact that equanimity is the hallmark only of the postanalytic Paul Mellon. A year before they married, Paul and Mary read Carl Gustav Jung's *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* and were profoundly affected by it. She suffered from asthma and had read that there might be a psychological basis to the disorder, and she began seeing a Jungian analyst in New York. In 1939 the couple traveled to Switzerland, where they were treated, individually, by the great man himself at his house in Küsnacht, near Zurich. The experience was not a success—Mellon found Jung's method maddeningly imprecise and irrelevant to his particular problems—and the outbreak of World War II provided a convenient excuse to return home.

Mellon fared much better with Freudian therapists in the U.S., even though Mary Mellon's difficult personality and erratic behavior seemed not to have been helped by psychiatry. Neither was her asthma, and she died suddenly of an attack that came on while she and her husband were riding in Virginia in 1946.

Two years later he married Bunny Lloyd, and their children—Timothy Mellon (now in the railroad business), Catherine Mellon Conover (who preceded Elizabeth Taylor as the wife of Senator John Warner), Stacy Lloyd III (formerly a Washington rare-book dealer), and Eliza Lloyd Moore (a painter and ex-wife of the current Earl of Drogheda, the *Architectural Digest* photographer known professionally as Derry Moore)—melded seamlessly into one family unit.

Among the passions Paul and Bunny Mellon pursued together was art. Although Paul Mellon had grown up in a house hung with his father's Cuyps and Corots, his own early collecting was confined to English sporting pictures, albeit of a very high order. In 1936 he bought his first painting by George Stubbs, the greatest animal painter of all, decades before Stubbs was given his proper due by serious critics. ("I thought even then that Stubbs was a pretty good artist," says Mellon with quiet pride.)

Bunny Mellon played a decisive role in expanding her husband's taste. "Another thing that I think she must be given credit for," says an old friend of the couple, "is that she's the one who opened his eyes to [illegible] the National Gallery." There are quite a few of them in their various houses as well. On the wall of their Washington living room is a small Renoir oil sketch of an artichoke, one of their first joint acquisitions, made on Bunny Mellon's initiative.

Working together and never buying a piece unless they were in agreement about it, the Mellons steadily amassed a collection of French Impressionists distinguished for its exceptional quality and unusual sophistication, especially when gauged against the obviousness and redundancy of so much Impressionist art. Over the chimneypiece of the Washington living room hangs Paul Cézanne's spectacular *Boy in a Red Waistcoat,* bought in 1958 at the watershed Jacob Goldschmidt sale at Sotheby's in London for $617,500, at the time the world record for a painting at auction. It was won for Mellon by an overeager bidding agent who went well over the limit his client had set. ("I'm very lucky that he did," Mellon says with justifiable satisfaction. Last year, Mellon promised the picture to the National Gallery in honor of its fiftieth anniversary.)

On another wall is Edgar Degas's *The Dance Lesson,* a long, narrow canvas of great poignance and subtlety. "Outside of my first Stubbs, I think that's my favorite picture of the whole collection," Mellon says, unable to take his eyes off it. "It's the combination of colors, this girl with that touch of red down in that corner, and the light coming in the windows, and the delicacy of the skirts. . . . He was really a great painter."

The pleasure that Mellon gets from his pictures is as high as the quality of the works themselves, which make the much-vaunted Annenberg collection of Impressionists look for the most part like garish greeting cards. For unlike the elder Mellon, Paul has bought pictures for his personal enjoyment rather than as a civic duty.

Andrew Mellon spent his declining years methodically setting up one of the most splendid acts of generosity his country has ever seen: the endowment and construction of the National Gallery of Art in Washington. Mellon stocked that building with extraordinary treasures bought at very high prices, even during the depths of the Depression, including masterpieces by Van Eyck, Raphael, Titian, and Rubens taken from the Hermitage by Stalin to finance his faltering Five-Year Plan and sold through the Knoedler & Co. gallery. Mellon was also the mainstay of the cunning Lord Duveen, who rented an apartment below Mellon's Washington flat and

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stocked it with prime pieces to tempt the old Maecenas at his leisure.

Paul Mellon maintains the allegation that the project was a trade-off with the government to drop his father's tax case is a myth: the elder Mellon began thinking about the transfer of his private collection and a new building to house it in 1927, well before his troubles with the government began. If anything, it seems remarkable that Andrew Mellon proceeded with his scheme through what he felt was a trumped-up prosecution.

But his sense of public responsibility never wavered, and neither has his son's. Frank E. Richardson is a New York private investor and horseman who grew up near the Mellon family in the Pittsburgh region and has hunted frequently with Paul Mellon, whom he considers the beau ideal of the American gentleman. "In western Pennsylvania there is a strong Presbyterian tradition of having to return to society the good that you've received from it," explains Richardson. "It's just the way we were brought up, and you didn't question it. So it's kind of a shock to realize that it now seems so unusual and that Paul is singled out for doing what used to be expected of everyone. But I suppose that with the exception of the Rockefellers he's one of the very few left who does so much so quietly."

It was Andrew Mellon's idea to leave his name off the National Gallery of Art, and that gift set the low-key style for Mellon philanthropy ever after. Only on rare occasions has Paul Mellon departed from that parental example. "People have said to me, 'Why did you not let Yale put your name on the British-art building?' " he relates. "Well, my answer is that when you walk in the door there's a plaque that says it was given by Paul Mellon, class of '29. And it's known. But there are other reasons not to have your name on it for the future. I'd be much less likely to give money to the Hirshhorn Museum, for instance, than I would to something that isn't named. In my father's day, it was perfectly clear to him that the Wideners weren't going to give their collections to the Mellon Museum, even though it was in Washington."

Although Paul Mellon did not shrink from paying top dollar for the best Impressionist pictures in the fifties, even he felt priced out of the market in due course. Explains the Duke of Beaufort, chairman of Marlborough Fine Art in London: "He bought them for nothing, and then I remember when they got expensive he just couldn't believe it. He said, 'I don't know, they expect me to keep buying these damn pictures, but I wouldn't dream of paying these prices.' "

Instead, Paul Mellon returned to his first love in art to build his second great collection, British painting of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He started in 1959, at a time when the British School was low in price and plentiful on the London market. But instead of the conventional works favored by American tycoons of his father's generation—grand full-length portraits by Thomas Gainsborough and Sir Joshua Reynolds, or saccharine pictures of children by George Romney, John Hoppner, and Sir Thomas Lawrence—Paul Mellon concentrated on a far different vision of England.

According to Allen Staley, a professor of art history at Columbia University and a noted authority on British painting, "His taste really reflected a country-house, almost a *Country Life*, kind of world: Stubbs, Arthur Devis, conversation pieces of a rather informal nature. The real significance of his collection, even more than the Stubbses, might be the revaluing of the rather modest, unpretentious, smallish picture. Everything grows out from that view of an eighteenth-century rustic sporting world, the kind of life Mr. Mellon would lead either in England or Virginia. He has certainly legitimized huge areas of British art that were dismissed before."

With the help of Basil Taylor, a brilliant but unstable British art adviser who committed suicide in 1975, Mellon built the best survey outside London, and in 1966 decided to give it to Yale, along with a gallery and study center to house it. Louis Kahn, now widely considered the most important American architect since Frank Lloyd Wright, was chosen to design the museum. Like many clients, Mellon found the otherworldly Kahn more than a bit bizarre. "One morning when we had breakfast," Mellon recollects, "he seemed a little crazy. He was drawing these things all over the tablecloth. He was sort of mystical in some way, but he was fascinating."

Kahn, however, had a more pompous idea of Mellon and his intentions than Mellon himself did—a problem that has been experienced by many who expect a *grand seigneur* rather than a gentleman farmer. Thus, at the bottom of an early proposal, Kahn inscribed the legend "Palazzo Melloni," even though the patron's own conception was not a Florentine palace but an English country house. Today an oasis in the decaying and dangerous heart of New Haven, the Yale Center for British Art manages to seem a beautifully run private establishment, especially when its founder comes to pay a call, as he did one morning last December, flying up in the Gulfstream to see a definitive retrospective of the work of Richard Parkes Bonington, a short-lived nineteenth-century prodigy little known outside art-historical circles.

Mellon's reactions to the works on display are personal but well informed. It takes him well over an hour to work his way slowly and attentively through the show. Stopping before Bonington's most admired pictures—small, brightly colored views of Venice—the major lender to the show is unafraid of expressing a heretical opinion. "I like these Venetian scenes less than any of them. They look like postcards to me."

If the British-art center comes closest to capturing Mellon's private personality, then his most public benefaction is sure to remain the East Building of the National Gallery. Between the beginning of the project in 1970 and the opening in 1978, the costs skyrocketed far above original estimates and wound up at $94.4 million, making it one of the most expensive cultural buildings of the period. But, as I. M. Pei recalls, Mellon was concerned mainly that everything be done right, even as the outlays mounted. "It's really a question of judgment and standards, and it's not always the same," notes Pei. "But when you put the two together, and you have very excellent judgment and very high standards, usually the decision is right."

With the precipitous rise in art prices during the decade after the East Building was completed, Mellon eventually found himself to be what he calls "art-poor"—the contemporary equivalent of being land-poor, or having too much of one's assets in a not easily liquefiable commodity. Thus, to the astonishment of many in the art world, Christie's announced that fourteen works from Mellon's private collection would be put up for auction late in 1989. Although it had long been believed that his pictures were earmarked in their entirety for museum bequests, Mellon decided to sell for "estate-planning purposes"—that is, to cash in at the peak of the market rather than risk a sale after his death, when prices might not be so high.

"It was kind of like a shark frenzy, people paying these tremendous prices," says Mellon of that unprecedented run-up of the

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international art market. "As time went on and people could still take deductions on capital gains, more and more people began to take advantage of that, just like people began to think more and more of works of art as investments. I think it was a growing feeling of greed, all part of this growing balloon of inflation in things to do with art.

"I was just hoping it would hold up," recalls Mellon of his gamble. "I had lunch at Christie's just before with Lord Carrington. I said to him, 'How long do you think this Impressionist market is going to hold up?' And he went like this," says Mellon, holding up crossed fingers.

As it turned out, that wish for luck was only halfway fulfilled. Seven of the fourteen Mellon works did not meet their reserve prices and were not sold, including Picasso's *Death of Harlequin* (a subject deemed too difficult for the Japanese market) and three Degas wax sculptures (believed to have conservation problems), on which Mellon had pinned high hopes. The other seven pieces, however, sold very well indeed, fetching a total of more than $51 million.

Mellon's biggest winner was Édouard Manet's *The Rue Mosnier with Flags*. He had paid $317,000 for the canvas at the Goldschmidt sale in 1958. It sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum for $26.4 million. "Well, I didn't do too badly," Mellon admits, and even manages to be grateful that he still has his beloved Degas waxes. "I'm awfully glad they didn't sell."

Still, there are many of his peers who are never satisfied, no matter how much they make or how much they achieve, so Paul Mellon's contented outlook can be seen as his greatest fortune beyond his vast material advantages. "Oh sure," he says, responding to the inevitable question, "I often think of things I would have done differently. But then I think, Well, how do I know? That might not have turned out that way at all. . . . I feel that everything that happened to me and everything I did was a logical sequence from other things before it. I don't have any big regrets about anything." □

Doomed Angel

(Continued from page 186) room *grand luxe* apartment in a building on Munich's fashionable Prinzregentenplatz not far from the Munich opera house. He sent Geli's mother off to semi-permanent duty at the Berchtesgaden retreat. And moved Geli in with him. They maintained separate bedrooms, but they were separate bedrooms on the same floor.

Outside that apartment Geli seemed to revel in the attention her role as Hitler's consort brought her. And the power it gave her over him.

Just twenty-one years old, the product of modest circumstances, she'd suddenly become a celebrity, flattered, catered to, the center of attention in the court of the man described as "the King of Munich"—who was on his way to becoming the emperor of the New Germany. She was the envy of untold numbers of women. Some of whom spoke resentfully of the spell she'd cast on Hitler. She "was coarse, provocative, and a little quarrelsome," Henrietta Hoffmann, the daughter of Hitler's photographer, told historian John Toland. But to Hitler, Henrietta says, Geli was "irresistibly charming: if Geli wanted to go swimming. . .it was more important to Hitler than the most important conference."

Still, for Geli, there was a price. Part of the price was virtual confinement in a huge apartment with no company but Hitler and her pet canary, "Hansi." Geli too was a bird in a gilded cage, trapped within the stony fortress with an uncle twice her age, an uncle increasingly consumed with what Hitler biographer Alan Bullock calls jealous "possessiveness" of her.

But possessiveness of what? Of a sexual relationship? What really went on between Hitler and Geli behind the granite façade of that Munich apartment building when night came? This has been the subject of a bitterly contested debate among historians, biographers, and memoirists for some sixty years—a special instance of the larger ongoing dogfight over the precise nature of his sexuality and its link to his character and his crimes. Scholarly antagonists confidently proclaim opinions that range from the assertion that Hitler was entirely asexual to the belief that he was virile and "led a normal sexual life" and may even have gotten Geli pregnant. To the view that his sexual life took a form so bizarre and aberrational that some found it, quite literally, unspeakable.

Whatever the explicit form Hitler's affections took, it became increasingly evident that for Geli the rewards of her public celebrity could not compensate for the oppressiveness of her private confinement with Hitler. And that in the final months of her life, indeed within days of her death, she was making desperate efforts to escape.

Vienna: The Central Cemetery

"That's it, you're standing on it right there," Hans Horváth tells me. Meaning that this patch of weedy grass in the gray-green gloom of this featureless field, in a section of the cemetery that looks as if it's been deserted even by the dead, is the precise place on the surface of the earth beneath which the long-lost body of Geli Raubal is to be found. The grave lost to history, and soon—Horváth hopes—to be reopened to history.

Of course, as with every other aspect of the Geli Raubal mystery, there is controversy over Horváth's claim. He says that he's had a professional surveyor align the coordinates of the cemetery-grid diagram with the graveyard earth, that he's found records indicating Geli's remains were encased in a zinc coffin, unlike the lost souls in the paupers' field enclosed in rotting wood. And that, with a metal detector, he's confirmed the concurrence of zinc coffin and surveyor's coordinates.

A Vienna city councillor, Johann Hatzl by name, the man in charge of the city's cemeteries, replied to an inquiry of mine by expressing doubt that Horváth has proved his case for the Geli grave site conclusively.

But Horváth has no doubt it's Geli below my feet and no one else. Hatzl and Vienna mayor Helmut Zilk, he says, are just searching for an excuse to deny the exhumation. (Zilk insists the chief reason for the city's refusal to approve the exhumation is the absence of a request from the deceased's family.)

I'm less interested at the moment in the bones beneath the weeds than in something Horváth told me as we were departing the Sacher café for the trip to the cemetery in his silver BMW. Something about new evidence he's come upon that's led him to believe there's an "American connection" to Geli's murder. And that he's got documents to prove it. He won't show them to me or get more specific at first: he's worried that he should preserve the revelation for his own projected book about Geli. And besides, he says, he's been burned by a journalist before. A *Der Spiegel* article which appeared five years ago, when he launched his exhumation

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crusade, portrayed him as something of a "National Socialist nostalgist," overly obsessed with artifacts of the Third Reich.

Not true, he says: he has many criticisms of Hitler for his half-baked racial theories. In fact, as we rolled up to the forbidding black iron gates of Vienna's Central Cemetery this afternoon, Horváth told me he wants me to meet his Israeli girlfriend, Miriam Kornfeld. "He says this will show you he's not a neo-Nazi," my translator explained.

Horváth's "a bit of a difficult character," Professor Szilvássy tells me later. A self-made man, an autodidact who's financed his investigative crusade with the revenues from his three prospering furniture- and art-restoration shops, Horváth displays an aggressiveness and abrasiveness that have not endeared him to the Vienna authorities, Szilvássy says. But whether we like his style or accept his "solution" to the case, his exhumation cause is just, Szilvássy maintains.

Horváth, who is forty-two, started collecting Hitler memorabilia as a teenager, but his ruling passion is anti-Communism, not pro-Nazism, he says. He adopts a version of the line put forward by certain conservative German historians in the mid-eighties, the one that provoked the famous *Historikerstreit* (historians' battle), the one that focuses on the "legitimately heroic" role of the German army battling against the barbaric Reds on the bloody eastern front (and tends to ignore what they were fighting *for*).

Horváth's memorabilia collection has grown so extensive over the years, he's accumulated such a copious supply of W.W. II army and SS uniforms and insignia, that he's often relied upon by movie companies filming period pieces in Austria to outfit whole detachments. His Vienna apartment is hung with Nazi uniforms and insignia.

I once asked Horváth's Israeli girlfriend, Miriam, how she felt spending her time in that kind of environment. Miriam is a tall, attractive young apartment-rental agent, not much older than Geli was when she died. "In Israel," she said, "it is impossible to speak at all of Hitler. He is, you know, too awful to talk about. But I believe it is important to learn about him, and through knowing Hans I have."

The surprising thing about Horváth as a researcher is that—unlike, say, most J.F.K.-assassination buffs—he does original research rather than merely weaving conspiracy theories. And, unlike them, he's capable of abandoning preconceptions. In fact, he has radically changed his mind since the *Der Spiegel* interview several years ago in which he did not dispute the suicide verdict. Now he tells me he's convinced Geli's death was murder. And that he can prove who did it.

Horváth's path to his "solution" started with a question that arose right here in the graveyard and still poses a stark challenge to the official story: How was it that Geli Raubal, whose death was publicly proclaimed a suicide in the press of Germany and Austria, could get to be buried in the Catholic cemetery's "consecrated ground," normally denied to suicides?

The question was first raised in its most accusatory form by Otto Strasser, a one-time Nazi Party insider who has been the source of a number of the most sensational stories about Hitler and Geli. In his 1940 memoir, Strasser recalled a message he had received from a priest named Father Pant. The Raubal-family confessor when Geli and her mother lived in Vienna, Pant remained a faithful family friend after they moved to Munich. According to Strasser, Father Pant confided to him in 1939 that he had helped ease the way for Geli's burial in consecrated ground. And then, Strasser says, the priest made this remarkable statement: "*I never would have permitted a suicide to be buried in consecrated ground.*"

Soon after a night with Hitler, Renaté Mueller flew out the window of a Berlin hotel. Her death was ruled a suicide.

In other words: Geli was murdered. When Strasser pressed the priest about what he knew, Pant said he couldn't reveal anything further—to do so would break the seal of the confessional.

What did the seal conceal? What might Father Pant have known that made him discount the official suicide story?

In the early eighties, Horváth decided to track down Father Pant. Discovered that he'd died in the village of Alland in 1965. Spoke to people who knew him in the village of Aflenz and in Vienna, where he'd met the Raubal family when Geli's mother worked at the convent school Pant was attached to. What they told him initially led Horváth, in his *Der Spiegel* interview, to discount Strasser's description of the priest's murder innuendo.

Since then, Horváth claims, he has come into possession of new evidence from Father Pant, which, in effect, breaks the seal of the confessional two decades after Pant's death.

Munich: Prinzregentenplatz and the Chinese Tower in the English Garden

It's still standing, Hitler's deluxe apartment building, that grim granite love nest on Prinzregentenplatz, with its stone gargoyles staring balefully out from what was once Geli's bedroom window. No longer a residence: after the war the unhappy final home of the woman who may have been Hitler's most intimate victim was transformed into an office of reparations for Jewish victims of Hitler. Now it houses another, lesser kind of reparations bureaucracy—it's the city of Munich's central traffic-fines office.

A friendly traffic cop there offered to show me around the death scene only after he'd carefully checked my press credentials. Apparently the bureau gets periodic visits from pilgrims, many of the neo-Nazi persuasion, who want to see the place where Hitler and Geli slept. The Munich cop said something similar to what Horváth said about the Vienna authorities: they fear that too much attention will create an unsavory shrine.

This kind of nervousness didn't seem entirely misplaced, that week in particular. The day I arrived in Munich via Vienna and Berchtesgaden, a feature in the London *Times* began, "A spectre is haunting Europe: the spectre of fascism." The story cited recent electoral gains of right-wing, racist, anti-immigrant parties. And the rise of openly neo-Nazi skinhead gangs roaming German cities attacking homeless immigrants, the scapegoats of the New Europe.

But here in the English Garden, Munich's central park, a mile away from the death scene, all is peaceful, bucolic, seemingly insulated from the resurgent

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Doomed Angel

specter stalking the streets of the cities of Europe.

The Chinese Tower, a tall, pillared gazebo atop a grassy knoll—a stone structure modeled upon the faux-Oriental "Temples of Contemplation" that were a fixture of eighteenth-century English landscape gardens—is a kind of shrine to one key school of thought on Hitler's psychosexual nature. It's the place where Geli allegedly made a startling midnight confession about what went on behind closed doors in Hitler's bedroom.

The account of this outpouring comes to us from Otto Strasser, who claimed to be the only man to have had a Hitler-sanctioned "date" with Geli, in the tormented final years of her life. Strasser and his brother Gregor were early Hitler allies, the leaders of a "left-wing" faction of the Nazi Party which emphasized the socialism in National Socialism. Otto, and later Gregor, eventually broke with Hitler; Otto set up an exiled opposition movement called the Black Front, based in Prague. Afterward, he fled to Canada and supplied American intelligence agents with a number of damning stories about Hitler—including the tale of the Chinese Tower.

"I liked that girl very much," Strasser told a German writer, "and I could feel how much she suffered because of Hitler's jealousy. She was a fun-loving young thing who enjoyed the Mardi Gras excitement in Munich but was never able to persuade Hitler to accompany her to any of the many wild balls. Finally, during the 1931 Mardi Gras, Hitler allowed me to take Geli to a ball. . . .

"Geli seemed to enjoy having for once escaped Hitler's supervision. On the way back. . . we took a walk through the English Garden. Near the Chinese Tower, Geli sat down on a bench and began to cry bitterly. Finally she told me that Hitler loved her but that she couldn't stand it anymore. His jealousy was not the worst of it. He demanded things of her that were simply repulsive. . . . When I asked her to explain it, she told me things that I knew only from my readings of Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis* in my college days."

To American O.S.S. intelligence officers debriefing him in 1943 after he defected, Strasser gave a somewhat different account of Geli's confession that was far more explicit.

Can we believe Strasser? The contentious question of Hitler's sexuality is one of a number of basic biographical issues which remain disturbingly unresolved, even after fifty years and countless thousands of studies. In the psychosexual realm, what we have is a long-running debate among three main schools of thought, which might be labeled the Party of Asexuality, the Party of Normality, and the Party of Perversion.

Rudolph Binion, a professor of history at Brandeis University and the author of *Hitler Among the Germans,* is a leading advocate of the Party of Asexuality. "His tie to his mother unsuited Hitler for any normal erotic relationship," Binion writes. He points to a statement made by Hitler in the early 1920s that "my only bride is my motherland"—this, Binion notes, "with his mother's picture now over his bed." Binion believes Geli Raubal was Hitler's "single approximation to *amour-passion*. Their difference in age approached his father's to his mother, who called his father 'Uncle' even after their marriage." But Binion doubts the "*amour-passion*" was ever consummated.

The Party of Normality (most of them German historians) tends to portray Hitler as someone who had "normal" physiology and "normal" heterosexual relationships with women. They take Hitler's pious declaration that his only bride was the motherland not as a rejection of sexual relations per se, merely as the reason he didn't marry and have children. But that doesn't mean Hitler never had sex. Werner Maser, the spearhead of the Party of Normality, went to such great pains to prove Hitler had the physiology and virility of a "normal" man that he once argued that Hitler had fathered a son back in 1918. And he told one of my researchers he believes Geli was probably pregnant with Hitler's child when she died.

But the Party of Normality must contend with the fact that Strasser is just one of a number of sources among those close to Hitler who testified to the aberrational quality of Hitler's intimate relations with women.

Rumors of Hitler's strange sexual practices had haunted him in much the same way rumors of "Jewish ancestry" shadowed his rise. In the late sixties, historian Robert Waite succeeded in getting declassified the secret "sourcebook" on Hitler's psychology compiled by the O.S.S. in 1943. Which made public for the first time a number of shocking accounts collected by U.S. intelligence specialists attesting to extremely unorthodox sexual practices on Hitler's part. (Some say the O.S.S. material, which is a compilation of raw and uncorroborated interviews, is not entirely reliable, but there are several

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stories in memoirs by Hitler contemporaries which describe similar practices.)

Based on the O.S.S. report and other sources, Waite has written, "The idea that Hitler had a sexual perversion particularly abhorrent to women is further supported by a statistic: of the seven women who, we can be reasonably sure, had intimate relations with Hitler, six committed suicide or seriously attempted to do so." In addition to Geli, "Mimi Reiter tried to hang herself in 1928; Eva Braun attempted suicide in 1932 and again in 1935; Frau Inge Ley was a successful suicide as were Renaté Mueller and Suzi Liptauer." Perhaps the most dramatic of these was the mysterious death of thirty-year-old Berlin film actress Renaté Mueller. Her director, one A. Zeissler, later told the O.S.S. that she had confided in him shortly after spending a night with Hitler in the Reichschancellery how distressed she was at the nature of the sexual practices Hitler demanded of her—with which, to her mortification, she complied. She claimed Hitler "fell on the floor and begged her to kick him...condemned himself as unworthy ...and just grovelled in an agonizing manner. The scene became intolerable to her, and she finally acceded to his wishes. As she continued to kick him he became more and more excited."

Soon after confiding this to Zeissler, Renaté Mueller flew out the window of a room on an upper floor of a Berlin hotel. The death was ruled a suicide.

But according to the O.S.S. reports and other accounts from Hitler contemporaries, Hitler's requests of Geli were even more extreme.

Let's begin with the affair of the purloined pornography. The most detailed account of the episode comes from Konrad Heiden, one of the first and most respected journalists to chronicle Hitler's rise (he was widely credited with coining the term "Nazi"). Author of four books on Hitler and the Nazis, forced to flee Germany in the thirties, Heiden was described in his *New York Times* obituary as "the best known authority outside Germany on the party and its leaders" in the pre–World War II period.

Heiden's magnum opus, *Der Fuehrer*, is remarkable for its portrait of Hitler's Munich circle, a now nearly forgotten collection of misfits, hunchbacks, sexual outlaws, moral degenerates, decadent aristocrats, ex-cons, and occult con men. Heiden calls Hitler's Munich circle "armed bohemians." They were Fascist libertines who spent boisterous days in the Café Heck and the Osteria Bavaria, stuffing themselves with pasta and pastries. While pimps scoured Munich schoolyards to supply boys for SA chief Ernst Röhm's predatory appetites, Hitler was reported to have been present at dissolute gatherings at the home of party photographer Heinrich Hoffmann, who had a wide acquaintance among artists, models, and other demimondaines.

But Heiden's Geli is hardly an innocent pearl among swine. He describes her as "a beauty on the majestic side...simple in her thoughts and emotions, fascinating to many men, well aware of her electric effect and delighting in it. She looked forward to a brilliant career as a singer, and expected 'Uncle Alf' to make things easy for her."

> The Chinese Tower is a kind of shrine to one key school of thought on Hitler's psychosexual nature.

In 1929, according to Heiden, "Hitler wrote the young girl a letter couched in the most unmistakable terms. It was a letter in which the uncle and lover gave himself completely away; it expressed feelings which could be expected from a man with masochistic-coprophil inclinations, bordering on what Havelock Ellis calls 'undinism.'...The letter probably would have been repulsive to Geli if she had received it. But she never did. Hitler left the letter lying around, and it fell into the hands of his landlady's son, a certain Doctor Rudolph.... The letter was... bound to debase Hitler and make him ridiculous in the eyes of anyone who might see it.... *Hitler seems to have feared that it was Rudolph's intention to make it public*" (my italics).

In other words, blackmail. According to Heiden, several Hitler confidants—his party treasurer, Franz Xaver Schwarz, a shadowy ex-priest, Father Bernhard Stempfle (who'd assisted in the writing of *Mein Kampf*), and the peculiar pack-rat like Hitler-memorabilia collector J. F. M Rehse—purchased the letter from Rudolph and were reimbursed with party funds, ostensibly for a projected collection of Hitler and party memorabilia.

Strange as this episode sounds, it closely parallels a story from another source this one within the Hitler entourage: Putzi Hanfstaengl. Who, in his 1957 memoir, *Unheard Witness*, tells a very similar story, with one key discrepancy. In Hanfstaengl's version the purloined pornographic material in the blackmail intrigue was not an explicit letter to Geli but explicit nude sketches *of* Geli.

The way Hanfstaengl tells it, the "first indication that there was something wrong with the relationship" between Hitler and Geli "came, as I recall, fairly early in 1930 from Franz Xaver Schwarz." Hanfstaengl says that he ran into Schwarz on a Munich street one day, found him "very down-in-the-mouth." Schwarz took him to his flat and "poured out what was on his mind. He had just had to buy off someone who had been trying to blackmail Hitler, but the worst part of the story was the reason for it. This man had somehow come into the possession of a folio of pornographic drawings Hitler had made ... They were depraved, intimate sketches of Geli Raubal, with every anatomical detail."

Hanfstaengl says he was surprised when he found Schwarz still had possession of the ransomed Geli porn. "Heaven help us, man! Why don't you tear the filth up?" he asked the party treasurer.

"No," he quotes Schwarz replying. "Hitler wants them back. He wants me to keep them in the Brown House safe."

The discrepancy between these two stories—a letter in Heiden, sketches in Hanfstaengl—seems of less moment than the remarkable convergence of the two accounts.

Rudolph Binion, a proponent of the Party of Asexuality, contends that Hanfstaengl told "tall tales," that Heiden "can't be trusted" because he exaggerated to sell books. And that Otto Strasser was also a questionable source. The partisans of the Party of Perversion, on the other hand, believe their reports are substantially true. Unfortunately, there are no unassailable witnesses to give us certainty either way. Nonetheless, the accounts of Heiden and Hanfstaengl provide a corroborative context for the third and most ex-

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plicit text cited by the Party of Perversion, the shocking story of Geli's confession which Otto Strasser told the O.S.S.

Strasser recalls a tearful Geli telling him that when night came, "Hitler made her undress [while] he would lie down on the floor. Then she would have to squat down over his face where he could examine her at close range, and this made him very excited. When the excitement reached its peak, he demanded that she urinate on him and that gave him his sexual pleasure.... Geli said that the whole performance was extremely disgusting to her and that although it was sexually stimulating it gave her no gratification."

Disturbing as the details of Geli's confession might seem, it is even more disturbing to conceive of Adolf Hitler as "normal"—more threatening to our notion of Western civilization is the idea that a "normal" person could turn out to be a Hitler, as one academic puts it.

Dr. Walter C. Langer, the psychiatrist who prepared a report (based on the O.S.S. sourcebook) titled *The Mind of Adolf Hitler*, appears to have had no problems accepting Strasser's outré account. Undinism, the name Havelock Ellis gave to this practice (after the water nymph Undine), thus became the semi-official U.S.-intelligence diagnosis of Hitler's sexuality: "From a consideration of all the evidence," Langer wrote, "it would seem that Hitler's perversion is as Geli has described it." It is "highly probable that he had permitted himself to go this far only with his niece." The Party of Perversion also includes the authors of the only full-length psychoanalytic biography of Hitler, *Hitler's Psychopathology*, medical writer Verna Volz Small and the late Dr. Norbert Bromberg, clinical professor of psychiatry at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, who connect Hitler's alleged undinism to what they describe as an overly close confinement with his parents during which he witnessed "the primal scene." Langer attributes it to a close confinement during his mother's pregnancies.

While all this is necessarily speculative, consider the implications for our understanding of Geli's death if Strasser's account of Geli's *cri de coeur* is correct.

At first glance it might appear to support a verdict of suicide: the "disgusting" practice became unbearable for her, and she ended it the only way she knew how, with a bullet through her chest. But look at this scenario: The young girl is in possession of the kind of knowledge the mere whisper of which, were it to become public, could destroy Hitler. Worse, she's incapable of remaining discreet. She blurts out the truth to Strasser; she tells a talkative girlfriend that her uncle is a "monster. You would never believe the things he makes me do" (according to Hanfstaengl); she may be talking to a Jewish lover in Vienna and God knows who else. And, according to Heiden, in their final quarrel, Geli may even have told *Hitler* she'd talked. Confessed that "in her despair [she'd] told outsiders about her relations with her uncle."

And thereby sealed her fate.

Disturbing as Geli's confession might seem, it is even more disturbing to conceive of Hitler as "normal."

There were a number of things that troubled me about Hans Horváth's confident assertion that he'd solved the Geli Raubal case.

Horváth has come up with a radically different theory of Geli's death, in which money, not sex, is the motive for murder. Horváth claims he's seen documents from the Raubal-family confessor, Father Pant, and from the archives of the Austrian secret police that link the mystery of Geli's demise to the mystery of Hitler's funding in his Munich years.

The question of Hitler's financial support during the twenties has never been adequately explained. What sustained him, allowed him to buy mountain vacation homes, brand-new Mercedeses, and princely apartments, particularly in the aftermath of his prison term and disgrace following the 1923 coup attempt? The Bavarian parliament once investigated reports of financial links between Hitler and Henry Ford (whose anti-Semitic books Hitler revered) without discovering the smoking gun.

To Horváth, *Geli* was the smoking gun. He claims wealthy American Nazi sympathizers (not Ford) were secretly supplying Hitler with sums of money that were being funneled through Vienna bank accounts. "Geli was one of the trustees for the accounts," Horváth maintains. "The man who organized the American connection was Franz von Papen." (Von Papen was the politically prominent right-wing German aristocrat who later became Hitler's ambassador to Austria.) "Von Papen would give Geli envelopes, little packages," Horváth says. The young girl "didn't know for a long time what it was for." But by 1931, "she was twenty-three, and the time came when suddenly you start to grow suspicious." Geli's suspicions, her indiscretions, Horváth says, led Hitler's inner circle to decide she was a threat to expose the secret money pipeline—and had to be eliminated.

(Hitler biographer Bradley Smith finds the notion of von Papen's involvement in such a pipeline preposterous since von Papen was a determined opponent of Hitler until 1933.)

One afternoon in the bar of my hotel in Vienna's Fifth District—after days of coyly refusing to show his "proof"—Horváth dramatically unfastened his expensive leather attaché case and, with a flourish, removed several sheets of transparent Lucite, pressed within which were pages of what he said were writings by Father Pant.

I listened as my interpreter translated. I kept waiting for the conclusive evidence Horváth had promised...but it wasn't there. The few cryptic scrawls were disappointing, unconvincing. Equally troubling, he promised to show me the corroborating material he claimed he found in the Austrian-secret-police archives—but then said it had disappeared from his files *and* from the archives.

Which is why I was even more skeptical when, in our final meeting at the Hotel Sacher, Horváth told me he knew the name of the man who murdered Geli. He'd seen a document, he claimed, that was the final testament of a Hitler security officer. In it, Horváth said, the man confessed that he shot Geli on orders from his superiors. But when I asked Horváth the name, he declined to reveal it—he said he was saving it for his book.

I'm afraid my skepticism about his theory will persist until he produces all his

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Geli's last day of life, September 18, a Friday, began with both Hitler and Geli making plans to travel. Hitler was off to the North to Hamburg, where he was scheduled to address a Saturday-night rally to kick off his upcoming presidential campaign in northern Germany.

Geli, too, had plans by then. She'd "made up her mind," Heiden tells us, "to end her whole life with Hitler, and go to Vienna."

Vienna. The name of the city could not have been pleasing to Hitler. He hated the place, reviled it as "the personification of incest" in *Mein Kampf* (where he also described it as the city which gave birth to his anti-Semitic consciousness), viewed it as a seething nest of his mortal enemies: Jews, Marxists, and journalists.

For Geli, Vienna was something else. It had been her only sanctioned escape from her confinement. He'd permitted her to go there to consult famous voice teachers, and if we believe several reports to this effect, she made the most of her brief flights to freedom, entering into a surreptitious relationship with a Jewish voice teacher—the ultimate act of defiance of her Jew-hating uncle.

And now, on the final day of her life, she was telling Hitler she was determined to go to Vienna—and, by some accounts, exactly why and for whom she was going.

Almost every source—except Hitler—says the two of them quarreled over Geli's planned trip. John Toland, who conducted extensive interviews with surviving members of Hitler's household staff, writes that Hitler had, just that week, aborted a previous escape plan. Geli had gotten as far as the Hitler cottage at Berchtesgaden when "she got a phone call from Uncle Alf urgently requesting her to return." After she got back, "her indignation turned to fury" when Hitler told her she was forbidden to travel while he went on his Hamburg trip. "The argument continued at a spaghetti lunch for two. . . . As Geli rushed out of the dining room, the cook noticed her face was flushed." Later, the cook "heard something smash and remarked to her mother, 'Geli must have picked up a perfume bottle from her dressing table and broken it.' "

"As he was setting out" on his trip, Heiden writes, "she called down to him from a window in the house. . . . *'Then you won't let me go to Vienna?'* And Hitler, from his car, called up, *'No!'* "

At some point, Geli sat at her desk and began writing a letter. That letter, her last known act, in a way is the most eloquent clue of them all. According to the *Münchner Post* it was a letter to a girlfriend in Vienna. The letter began, "*When I come to Vienna, hopefully very soon—we'll drive together to Semmering an—*"

It ended there, in the midst of her first sentence, in the midst of a *word*—the final *d* of the German *und* was left off. That missing *d* suggests an interruption that was sudden and unwelcome and compelling.

But even more consequential is the tone of the letter itself: remarkably upbeat, forward-looking, and hopeful-sounding for a young woman who is supposedly on the verge of shooting herself. Indeed, the big mistake made by the damage-control squad when it arrived at the death scene was not destroying this note, because it is actually a very strong piece of evidence against the suicide theory. Is it conceivable that Geli, happily envisioning a spell in the bracing air of the Semmering (a mountain resort sixty miles south of Vienna), would shortly thereafter proceed to ferret out Hitler's 6.35-mm. Walther from where he kept it in his bedroom, and blast a hole in her chest?

Geli Raubal's letter, her last known act, in a way is the most eloquent clue of all.

In any case, sometime between nightfall and the next morning *someone* shot Geli. There are an extraordinary number of conflicting versions of how the body was discovered. In almost all the accounts, the housekeeper couple who lived there claimed never to have heard anything suspicious, not to have noticed anything wrong until the next morning, when Geli didn't answer to a knock. According to the official story, they found her door locked from the inside. Rudolf Hess was summoned. Some say the door was broken open in his presence and he was the first to inspect the death scene. What he found inside was Geli in a beige dress and a pool of blood, lying face up on her couch, lifeless, Hitler's gun still clutched in a death grip. (Toland, who bases his version on interviews with housekeeper Frau Anni Winter, says it was not Hess but party treasurer Franz Xaver Schwarz and party publisher Max Amann who arrived, found the door locked, and summoned a locksmith.)

Of course, we have only the word of Hitler's staff on all this. We have only their word that no suicide note was found; in any case, none was there when the police were finally summoned to the death scene. (Hanfstaengl says snidely of Frau Winter, "I strongly suspect it was made worth her while for the rest of her life to adhere to the official version.")

By that time the fix was in: Bavarian minister of justice Franz Gürtner reportedly permitted the body to be shipped off to Vienna after a cursory look by the police doctor and a hasty declaration of suicide. Later, according to some reports, when a public prosecutor began his own inquiry, Gürtner (later promoted to minister of justice for the Reich) had it quashed. There never was a thorough investigation.

But there *was* a cover-up. Why? Let's briefly examine the competing theories of what might have happened in Geli's bedroom that night.

It Was Just "a Lamentable Accident"

This was the way that Hitler's handlers were going to spin the official story, according to Hanfstaengl, who was the party's foreign-press liaison officer.

Hanfstaengl reports that Hitler "was in a state of hysteria, and left the same day" for the seclusion of a friend's lakeside retreat to escape press scrutiny. (Most sources say Hitler never saw the body. One uncorroborated account from a Hitler confidant, Otto Wagener, has Hitler present when the coroner removed the bullet from Geli's chest. Wagener dates Hitler's vegetarianism to that moment, but no one else places him in a room with Geli's corpse.)

In his wake, Hitler left four men—Rudolf Hess, Gregor Strasser, Franz Schwarz, and party youth leader Baldur von Schirach—to handle damage control. Which they did badly: one of the first things this nervous group did was to subvert their initial "stage fright" suicide story.

That afternoon, says Hanfstaengl, Bal-

There are plenty of reasons to fight underage drinking.

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♦ *National Collegiate Athletic Association Foundation.*

Along with The National Collegiate Athletic Association Foundation, we provide alcohol education grants through their "Choices" Program. It encourages NCAA colleges, universities and conferences to develop, implement and evaluate campus-wide alcohol education programs that work toward the elimination of underage drinking and promotes education designed to enable the students to make informed choices about their lives.

♦ *BACCHUS.*

Established on over 500 college and university campuses throughout North America, BACCHUS is an international student organization devoted to providing proactive alcohol education programming at a peer to peer level. Through the development of year-round education initiatives, BACCHUS students promote responsible decision-making, healthy lifestyles and encourages respect for the law and campus drinking policies.

♦ *Program ID.*

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Programs like these are working. Underage drinking is on the decline. According to a study by the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research, drinking among high school seniors has dropped 21% since 1978, and is now at its lowest level since the study began in 1975. Over that same time, the number of drivers killed in teenage drunk driving accidents has decreased by 40% as reported by the U.S. Department of Transportation. It's progress, but there's a lot more work to do.

At Anheuser-Busch, we feel that education and awareness are the best tools to fight underage drinking. We will continue to support these programs and develop new ones to help make underage drinking a thing of the past.

Anheuser-Busch, Inc.

We invite you to share your thoughts on the issues mentioned here. We would also be happy to send you information regarding our policies and programs designed to encourage responsible drinking. Write: Anheuser-Busch, Inc., Consumer Awareness and Education, One Busch Place, St. Louis, MO 63118

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Doomed Angel

... von Schirach phoned from the apartment to party headquarters at the Brown House to tell the press office "to issue a communiqué about Hitler having gone into deep mourning after the suicide of his niece. Then the group at the flat must have got into a panic, because twenty-five minutes later von Schirach was on the phone again asking if the communiqué had gone out and saying that the wording was wrong. They should announce that there had been *a lamentable accident* [emphasis mine]. But by then it was too late. The word was out..."

Which is fairly suspicious when you think about it. They had decided to ask people to believe that Geli was playing with a loaded gun, which somehow shot her in the chest. And so, from the very first moment, the suicide story seems to have been just one of a number of possible *stories*, cover versions they were toying with, one that Hitler's own advisers thought too shaky to foist upon the public—before they learned they were stuck with the theory that

Geli Killed Herself Because of Stage Fright

Even Hitler could barely bring himself to endorse the "explanation" for Geli's suicide put out by his damage-control team: that she killed herself because she was "nervous" about her musical debut. In fact—in an anomaly that has been overlooked by historians—in his response to the accusatory *Münchner Post* article, Hitler himself undermines the performance-anxiety suicide theory. He *does* say Geli "was worried that she was not yet fit for her public appearance." But he does *not* offer this as a reason for her suicide. Instead, he proffers it as a refutation of the *Post* report that he and Geli quarreled over her desire to make a trip to Vienna to become engaged to a music teacher.

Hitler claims that he did not object to the Vienna trip and that it was "not true that she was going to get engaged in Vienna," that, in fact, Geli was going to Vienna "to have her voice checked once again by a voice teacher" to help her prepare for her recital. In other words, she wasn't suicidal over her debut, she was planning practical steps to prepare herself for it. Hitler's statement, then, leaves us with *no* viable theory from him or his henchmen to explain why Geli wanted to kill herself, no counter to the suggestion advanced in contemporary newspapers that

Geli Killed Herself Because She Was Unable to Bear Hitler's Sexual Demands

This is the theory that seems to be supported by the research of Langer and Waite, who toted up the number of suicide attempts by women in the aftermath of a romantic interlude with Hitler. If one believes that Geli committed suicide, this appears to be the most compelling explanation, one where the motivation is commensurate with the act.

There is, however, a kind of unofficial, Hitler-sympathetic explanation of Geli's suicide motive, a fallback theory that has been advanced by those of the Party of Normality who wish to absolve him of having driven Geli to her death with his unorthodox sexual demands. I'm speaking of the belief that

Geli Was Jealous of Eva Braun

Consider the way Werner Maser, the most energetic champion of the Party of Normality, makes Hitler's love life with Geli and Eva Braun sound like a second-rate *Dynasty* episode: "His evenings and nights belonged to Geli Raubal who quickly sensed, indeed knew, that her uncle had another girl friend whom he did not wish her to meet. Geli was in love with Hitler and Hitler was flirting outrageously with Eva Braun."

According to Toland, Geli found a note from Eva to Hitler in Uncle Alf's jacket pocket. Toland's source, Frau Winter, claims she saw Geli angrily tear up the note. When Frau Winter pieced it together, she maintains, it read as follows:

Dear Herr Hitler,

Thank you again for the wonderful invitation to the theater. It was a memorable evening. I am most grateful to you for your kindness. I am counting the hours until I may have the joy of another evening.

Yours,
Eva

Some believe *this* was what drove Geli to suicide. The way Toland and Maser portray the relationship, Geli was madly, possessively in love with that charming cad Adolf and would rather have shot herself than face the prospect of losing him to Eva. Particularly when, according to a widely held theory,

Geli Was Pregnant with Hitler's Child

Maser, in fact, believes their relations were so conventional sexually that Geli was probably pregnant with Hitler's child. And was driven to suicide because she realized she'd lost him to Eva, and perhaps feared she'd end up spurned with a fatherless child.

An even more explosive variant of the pregnancy theory of motive holds that

Geli Was Pregnant with the Child of a Jewish Cuckolder

This theme appears in a number of variations. The *Münchner Post* merely reports an engagement to an unspecified suitor in Vienna. Another source has it as a Jewish voice teacher. Hanfstaengl suggests Geli was pregnant by "a Jewish art teacher from Linz."

Was there a real Jew who put the horns on Hitler? Or did some Iago in Hitler's entourage—eager to be rid of the troublesome girl, who was distracting him so dangerously—deliberately arouse unfounded suspicions about her Vienna trips, her Vienna music teacher, in order to provoke a quarrel between Hitler and Geli?

Hitler as Othello? Geli as Desdemona?

Geli's consorting with a Jew would have been a deep sexual wound to Hitler. She would have been, to use his odious rhetoric, "polluted." The humiliation would have been a political wound as well, perhaps a fatal one: Hitler's sweetheart chooses a Jew over the champion of Aryan supremacy. It would have been unbearable.

There was also another kind of political danger: sexual intimacy might have led to confessional intimacy, an intimacy in which Geli might have told her Jewish lover exactly what kind of aberrational practices Hitler demanded of her. If Geli told just one Jew, and if, in Hitler's eyes, all Jews were linked in an implacable conspiracy against him, she would be placing in the hands of all Jews (and their journalist allies) enough sensational material to destroy him. And there is evidence that by the end Geli *was* talking to outsiders. Which leads us to what might be called

The Himmler Bushido Theory

This very complex, seemingly farfetched theory nonetheless has the strong endorsement of one of the most trustworthy contemporary observers: Konrad Heiden. Also, according to Heiden, of Geli's mother. He tells us that in the years after her daughter's death Angela Raubal "hinted at murder, or else suicide under compulsion or strong suggestion." She didn't accuse Hitler. "On the contrary, she said, she was sure that Adolf was determined to marry Geli. She mentioned another name: Himmler."

Suicide under compulsion? Heiden cites the Nazi Party exaltation of the code of personal honor—Bushido—proselytized by Hitler's Japanophile geopolitical adviser, Karl Haushofer.

What would it mean in practice? Heiden paints the following "gruesome scene," as he calls it: "We can see Himmler [the new head of the SS], calling at a late hour; explaining to Geli that she had betrayed the man who was her guardian, her lover, and her Führer in one. According to National Socialist conceptions, there was only one way of making good such a betrayal." That is, a suicide of honor.

Hanfstaengl describes a remarkably similar final scene, only he places *Hitler*, not Himmler, in the bedroom with Geli, saying in effect that

Hitler Talked Geli into Committing Hara-kiri

"It may well be that Hitler extracted from her the real purpose of her visit" to Vienna—the Jewish lover—Hanfstaengl writes. "It is not too difficult to reconstruct the reaction of that tortured mind and body. His anti-Semitism would have caused him to accuse her of dishonoring them both and to tell her that the best thing she could do was to shoot herself. Perhaps he threatened to cut off all support from her mother. He had swallowed for so long the Haushofer line about the samurai and bushido and the necessity in given circumstances of committing the ritual suicide of hara-kiri that he may have overwhelmed the wretched girl."

Feme-*Murder Theory*

This is the belief, reported if not endorsed by Joachim Fest, that a death sentence had been passed on Geli by the inner-party "court" (or "*Feme*," after the informal tribunals of medieval Germany). Such vigilante death sentences had previously been handed down on other troublesome individuals who were threats to the party. There was, for instance, the plot to murder SA chief Ernst Röhm when his homosexual love letters found their way to the press.

Finally, we come to the most explosive and least well-explored possibility of all, the one maintained by the brave, doomed investigative journalist Fritz Gerlich, who died trying to report it:

Hitler Did It

Consider this scenario: The violent quarrel over the spaghetti lunch escalates. Hitler strikes Geli, fracturing her nose. Geli, hysterical, runs to get Hitler's gun. Waves it around for dramatic effect, threatening to kill either him or herself. Or Hitler, in one of his famous fits of rage, pulls out the gun to intimidate her. The gun goes off and Geli falls. Hitler has shot her, either deliberately or inadvertently, in a struggle. (If the latter, it might explain why some of his aides wanted to go with the "lamentable accident" theory.)

Let's look at his behavior: We know he quarreled with her that day and lied about it. We know he lied about her real reason for going to Vienna. We know he fled town to escape scrutiny and had her body spirited out of town. We know he exhibited hysterical grief and suicidal despair afterward that could have been a charade to throw off suspicion—or genuine remorse over a crime of passion.

Knowing he would be killed, Gerlich tried to smuggle out of Dachau his version of what had happened in Geli's bedroom.

We know the only denial he made was a narrow nondenial that nonetheless succeeded in undermining his official story. We know that as soon as he came to power he had at least four former supporters who talked too much about the death of Geli murdered. (Gregor Strasser, Father Stempfle, and, as we shall see, Fritz Gerlich and one of his sources, Georg Bell.)

We know, in other words, that he acted guilty as sin.

Well, it has been said, he had an alibi. He left Munich sometime after lunch that Friday, his staff claimed, heading for Hamburg, his chauffeur Schreck at the wheel of his big Mercedes. According to Toland, citing party photographer Heinrich Hoffmann (who claims to have been in the car), Hitler spent that night at the Deutscher Hof hotel in Nuremberg, ninety miles north of Munich. It was not until the next morning, the alibi goes, when he'd already departed for Hamburg, that word reached him of Geli's death. Supposedly, Hess called the Deutscher Hof from the death scene and had the hotel dispatch a motorcycle courier to overtake Hitler's car. At which point Hitler raced back to Munich so fast his Mercedes was even stopped for speeding (going thirty-four miles per hour through the center of the small town of Ebenhausen) and he was issued a ticket—the only documentary support for the alibi—which conveniently placed him at a time and place remote from the death scene.

But not really remote enough to exempt his alibi from careful scrutiny—though most historians have accepted it at face value. Hitler could easily have been at the death scene Friday, sped away north, and spent the night at the Deutscher Hof hotel—around two hours away.

Should we really take *Hitler's* word on faith that he wasn't a murderer?

Who are the witnesses who corroborate Hitler's alibi? His chauffeur, Schreck; his housekeeper, Frau Winter; his photographer, Hoffmann; and his faithful deputy Rudolf Hess (or, according to Toland, faithful staffers Schwarz and Amann). Since by most accounts no one admits to hearing a shot fired, it is impossible to reliably place the time of death—it could have happened anytime after the quarrel, leaving plenty of time for Hitler to manifest himself elsewhere. And since there was no police investigation to confirm whether the door had been locked *from the inside* and then broken open by Hess, we have only Frau Winter's word on the crucial assertion that Geli must have been alone when the gun was fired.

None of these problem areas in his alibi prove Hitler guilty of Geli's death, but it's important to realize he doesn't deserve the free pass he's gotten on this case. There's no good evidentiary reason for history to let him off the hook on what may have been his first murder, perhaps the only one he committed with his own hands.

Yes, there were millions more to come. All the more reason to care about this one. Particularly if what he learned from it was precisely that, with a Big Lie, he could get away with murder. If he could kill someone he "loved," and escape the consequences, how much easier to go on to kill those he hated. Don't we owe it to history to do everything humanly possible—including exhumation of the victim's remains—to get to the bottom of it?

We owe it also to Fritz Gerlich, the one

Doomed Angel

courageous journalist who tried, while Hitler was still alive, to get to the bottom of it. Who, indeed, may *have* gotten to the bottom of it, but who was silenced before he could bring what he'd found to the surface.

Dachau

SPECTACULAR ARRESTS IN MUNICH

It is this sensational headline on a sixty-year-old newspaper preserved here, mounted on a wall in the somberly lit museum at the Dachau concentration camp, that put me back on the trail of Fritz Gerlich's lost scoop.

Because those "spectacular arrests"—of three of Gerlich's journalist colleagues, who'd been marked men after Gerlich himself had been seized—were one further dramatic indication of just how seriously Hitler's people took Gerlich's threat to publish a story linking Hitler to Geli's murder.

Gerlich was an unlikely candidate to become a Hitler nemesis, at least in the 1920s, when he was a well-known conservative writer and editor, a right-wing nationalist. But in the mid-twenties a change came over this stout, hard-nosed Bavarian with the steely eyes and the steel-rimmed glasses: a mystical religious streak appeared. He became a devotee and biographer of a saintly young German woman named Therese Neumann, who was said to have lived for years on no food but holy Eucharist wafers.

A kind of Catholic spiritual-renewal cult emerged around her and Gerlich, who'd become editor of the powerful conservative daily, the *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, gradually grew to be part of the small, embattled Catholic opposition to Hitler. In 1930, Gerlich launched a publication specifically designed to combat the nation's lurch toward Nazism, a weekly he later renamed *Der Gerade Weg* ("The Right Way"). Did his devotion to the saintly girl lead him to believe that Geli was a kind of martyr?

Whatever the source of his courageous decision to publish his sensational allegations, he must have known it would lead to his own martyrdom. Because Gerlich planned to publish a story linking Hitler to Geli's murder *two months after Hitler came to power*, in an issue scheduled to appear in early March 1933. Until then, *Der Gerade Weg* was still publishing; the machinery of total repression had moved at a slightly slower pace in Munich.

But not slow enough to save Gerlich. In early March, reports reached Nazi Party headquarters that Fritz Gerlich was about to publish a damning exposé of Hitler and the party. However word got out—one report maintains that there was a Nazi informer inside Gerlich's newspaper office—the response was swift, brutal, and devastating.

According to the eyewitness report of Gerlich's secretary, on the evening of March 9 a squad of fifty storm-trooper thugs burst into the *Der Gerade Weg* office, seized all the written and printed material they could find, cornered Gerlich in his office, and emerged shouting, "We kicked him in the face until the blood spilled out of his mouth!" And when his secretary came into the room, she reports, "there was Gerlich, full of blood."

Should we really take Adolf Hitler's word on faith that he wasn't a murderer?

As for Gerlich's about-to-be-published exposé, "the SA found the copies of his documents, took them over to the police headquarters, and destroyed them."

Gerlich himself was dragged off to prison, first to a holding pen at Stadelheim, then to Dachau. He lived for another year and three months in "protective custody." Tortured by the SA, knowing he would eventually be killed, he tried desperately to smuggle out through his fellow prisoners his version of what had happened in Geli's bedroom the night she died.

Indeed, Gerlich's newspaper colleague and biographer, one Baron Erwein von Aretin, reports that Gerlich never stopped trying. And that he did succeed in getting one fellow prisoner, who later escaped across the border to Switzerland, to publish a sketchy account of Gerlich's ordeal over the Geli exposé, in a Swiss Catholic newspaper. What appeared there, and what has been repeated elsewhere over th years, were assertions, not proof, asse tions that Gerlich had discovered that Hi ler murdered Geli, and had the documen to prove it.

But what documents? What was it th SA seized and burned the day of the raid The late von Aretin describes them a documents concerning the mysteriou 1933 Reichstag fire, scandalous materia involving SA chief Röhm, and "th names of key witnesses in the murder o Hitler's niece Geli."

Was there more? Will we ever know Gerlich cracked the case? A month afte his arrest, one of his principal sources Georg Bell (a onetime intimate of Röhm' who turned against him), was found mur dered in an Austrian border town. Gerlic himself was murdered on the Night of th Long Knives, in 1934. (The last victim Father Stempfle, was a middleman in th purloined-porn affair who, according t Dr. Louis L. Snyder's *Encyclopedia o the Third Reich*, "made the mistake o talking too much about the relationshi between Hitler and Geli [and] was foun dead in a forest near Munich. There wer three bullets in his heart.")

Must we concede victory to Hitler i his crusade to exterminate any ques tions—and questioners—who cast doub upon his version of Geli's death?

This winter in Munich I made one las effort to see if there was anyone alive wh could throw any light on Gerlich's los solution to the Geli Raubal mystery Through a researcher I was able to contac the son of Gerlich's biographer, von Are tin. He said his father had told him th following:

"There was a state's attorney inquir into the murder of Geli Raubal. My fathe had a copy of the documents on his des in February 1933. When the situation be came difficult, my father gave these docu ments to his cousin and co-owner of th *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, Kar Ludwig Freiherr von Guttenberg, in orde to bring them to Switzerland and depos them in a bank safe. As my father remem bered, these documents showed that Ge was killed by order of Hitler. Guttenber carried the documents to Switzerland, bu kept secret the number of the bank ac count because he thought it would be to dangerous to tell anyone. Guttenberg en gaged in the 20 July 1944 [anti-Hitle coup attempt], was killed in 1945, an took the secret with him into the grave."

This recollection corroborates the ac count given by Paul Strasser, recorded i his brother Otto's 1940 memoir: "An in quest was opened at Munich. The publi

prosecutor, who has lived abroad since Hitler's accession to power, wished to charge him with murder, but Gürtner, the Bavarian Minister of Justice, stopped the case. It was announced that Geli had committed suicide.... You remember Gerlich, the editor of *Der Gerade Weg*? He made a private investigation at the same time as the police, and collected overwhelming evidence against Hitler. Voss, Gregor's lawyer, no doubt knew all about it too. He had all our brother's secret papers at his house, but he was killed like Gerlich." Otto Strasser believed that his brother Gregor "knew Hitler shot Geli"—and that Gregor, himself assassinated on the Night of the Long Knives, was murdered because he talked too much about Geli.

I was also able to discover a ninety-year-old man living in Munich, another one of Gerlich's colleagues during those dark days of the early thirties, Dr. Johannes Steiner. He's the retired founder of a publishing house that bears his name. In response to questions I sent him, Steiner replied that he had no memory of what Gerlich was going to print about Geli. He did, however, have one haunting recollection. Of a final, cruel gesture Hitler's men made after they murdered Gerlich at Dachau: "They sent to his wife, Sophie, Gerlich's broken spectacles, all spattered with blood."

A symbolic declaration, perhaps, that Fritz Gerlich looked too hard, saw too much to live.

"When I come to Vienna,
hopefully very soon—we'll drive
together to Semmering an—"

The Semmering. This was Geli Raubal's final vision, the insanely picturesque Alpine mountain-"cure" resort she was dreaming of driving to, at the moment her last letter was so suddenly and irrevocably interrupted.

One can see why, that September, with the oncoming Munich autumn making the Hitler apartment even more dark and grim, she'd focus on this place above the clouds, with its sparkling, cleansing vistas out of *Heidi*.

I drove down there one afternoon to take a break from my graveyard conversations with Professor Szilvássy and Horváth. The twisting road up the lower slopes of the Semmering range was choked with thick, cottony fog, but above the mist line the diamond-bright clarity of the razor-sharp crags in the crystalline mountain air was almost painful in its lucidity.

Looking out from the glassed-in sun porch of a hotel café suspended high above the clouds, I was trying to bring Geli into sharper focus—resolve the double image of her the memoirists have left behind: angel/enchantress or manipulator/slut. Each is undoubtedly a distorted magnification of two different sides of the same young woman. One who was, above all, still young, still a girl when she moved in with Hitler, hardly knew what she'd bargained for, and certainly must be regarded—whether suicide or murder—as Hitler's victim. If he didn't do it himself, he certainly drove her to it.

If she was not an entirely innocent victim, she must at least be accorded the excuse of having been *ignorant*—ignorant as everyone else in the world was of the magnitude of the future horror breeding in the mind of Adolf Hitler. And yet living day and night with her own personal experience of it.

She may have been the first one to know close up how monstrous he really was. And one of the first and only ones of those close to him to resist, subvert, or thwart his will with whatever weapon she had at hand, whether it meant defying him with a Jewish lover or firing his gun at herself, thus extinguishing his most cherished source of pleasure.

There's one final, haunting image of Geli that lingers with me: Geli and the ill-fated canary. It comes from Heiden, who seems to have had a source on the household staff.

It's the afternoon of her last day, after the spaghetti-lunch quarrel. Heiden pictures the doomed girl wandering, Ophelia-like, around the gloomy nine-room apartment. She was bearing aloft "a little box containing a dead canary, bedded in cotton; she sang to herself and wept a little and said she meant to bury poor dead 'Hansi' near the [Berchtesgaden] house on the Obersalzberg."

It's unlikely poor Hansi got the burial he undoubtedly deserved. Did Geli Raubal?

Certainly Hitler went to great lengths to demonstrate his posthumous devotion. "Geli became for him a kind of personal cult," Robert Waite writes. "He locked the door to her room and would allow no one to enter except [his housekeeper], who was instructed never to change anything in the room but daily to place a bunch of fresh chrysanthemums there. He commissioned a bust and portraits [and] along with portraits of his mother, he kept a portrait or bust of Geli in every one of his bedrooms."

But as elaborate and demonstrative as Hitler's last rites for her were, Geli has been denied one last right: that the truth about the way she died be rescued from the shroud of mysterious darkness that still covers it. □

Ciao, Tina

(Continued from page 218) shock and profound grief but a sense, too, that there was something hopelessly incongruous about the way her life had been torn from her.

Her family's decision to reveal the cause of death made Tina Chow the most celebrated female to date to have succumbed to AIDS. But her friends will remember her as, among other things, the woman who would stroll down Fifty-seventh Street with antique silk flowers pinned casually to her severely cut jacket, only to find the same look copied in all the best stores a few weeks later. After all, with her little shells under man-tailored suits and flats, she pioneered what became known as the Armani look. A few years ago, she began glomping masses of chains and crystals around her neck. Soon a clothing store in New York's SoHo featured in its window a vintage jacket hung with necklaces and a sign that said, HOMMAGE À TINA CHOW. Now hordes of young men in London and New York wake up, pomade their short-cropped hair, throw on her signature uniform of pressed white T, cashmere cardigan, and narrow slacks, and declare, "Today I'm Tina Chow!"

Officially, her legacy is being commemorated at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York in its latest exhibition, "Flair: Fashion Collected by Tina Chow." A book of the same title is being published by Rizzoli in conjunction with the exhibition. But by the time the book was under way Tina had tired of gilding the lily and was moving away from accumulation, becoming motivated instead by a nascent self-awareness perhaps reinforced by the precarious state of her health. For a decade she had struggled to assert her own presence within the magnetic force field of Michael

Ciao, Tina

Chow. Over the last few years she had begun crafting jewelry for some of the exclusive stores that tracked her every fashion statement, as well as developing New Age aromatic massage oils and sculpting in crystals and wood.

But the sad irony of it all was that before she was forty Tina Chow had basically run out of time. In June of 1989, five months before her divorce from Michael Chow became final, Tina Chow learned that she had full-blown AIDS.

"I can't breathe," she told her boyfriend, the film producer Richard Roth, just before getting on a plane for Japan. When the gem dealer and jewelry designer John Reinhold, who was staying in the same Tokyo hotel as Chow, called her, Tina said she couldn't see him—she had a bad cold or maybe the flu. "I had just seen her for lunch in L.A. the week before and she had looked extraordinarily well," says Reinhold. "Tina was always so energetic that it wasn't unlike her to travel if she didn't feel well."

Her illness quickly turned into severe pneumonia, and Tina went into the hospital, where she was given a battery of tests that produced the stunning news. No one close to her remembers any earlier warning signs of the illness, a story that is fairly common among women with AIDS. "During the first three to five years after infection, women often get vague symptoms—fevers, vaginal yeast infections, diarrhea, skin rashes, sinusitis, subtle kinds of things," says Dr. Patricia Kloser, medical director for AIDS Services at the University Hospital of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey and a pioneer of AIDS care for women. "Early symptoms can quite easily be blamed on everything from traveling under stress to New York weather."

According to Michael Chow, Tina was infected with the AIDS virus four years earlier, in late 1985. She contracted it from the handsome and wellborn bisexual French playboy Kim d'Estainville, who had been linked with the beautiful and the powerful of both sexes on at least two continents—"a walker who screwed them all," according to one less than charitable description. D'Estainville's long-running affair with Hélène Rochas, one of Paris's leading socialites, ended, the story goes, when she picked up the telephone extension one day and overheard a torrid conversation her lover was having with one of her best friends—a man who is among France's leading cultural czars. D'Estainville died of AIDS just after Christmas 1990.

At least one friend had warned Tina at the time that d'Estainville might be a high-risk partner. But when Tina told d'Estainville what was being said about him, he became infuriated. "I was naughty," Tina later told Jun Kanai, who runs Issey Miyake's U.S. operations and is helping curate Chow's fashion exhibition for the Kyoto Costume Institute. "I only slept with this man a few times and I got it, so this should be a warning."

Tina Chow's sexual experience was, by all accounts, limited. "Tina was not the kind of person to pass from one bed to another," says her close friend the photographer Eric Boman. But there was a moment when cosmopolitan Tina would melt from hot pursuit, a romantic who appeared to believe in fairy tales.

She grew up in the suburbs of Cleveland and attended Lutheran and public schools; she was a very well-behaved girl who raced to keep up with her slightly older tomboy sister, Bonny. The family was so wholesome—her father had studied for the Lutheran ministry before he found his true vocation, importing and collecting bamboo objects—that the State Department featured Walter and Mona Lutz and their two baby girls in a propaganda film shown in Japan, titled *A Japanese War Bride in America*. "Bay Village, Ohio, was very *Leave It to Beaver*," says Bonny Lutz, who is married to the musician and producer David Byrne. "We really did grow up in the perfect small-town suburb."

There was almost no consciousness, Bonny says, that theirs was an interracial family. "We ate sushi—about the only thing I remember is that we learned early not to tell our friends about eating raw fish. We were very integrated, and our mother's level of refinement was so high that when our friends came over we were not allowed to eat potato chips out of the bag. We had to put them into a lacquer bowl and serve them." The close-knit Lutzes also adhered to a family dynamic that stressed traditional Oriental reserve. "We weren't Italian—we didn't discuss things."

Tina may have been shy—Bonny can't remember that she ever had a date in high school—but there are indications she was aware of style. "When the Twiggy look came out, Tina was the first one sent home because her skirt didn't touch the floor when she was kneeling. She begged me to cut her hair like Twiggy, but I wouldn't. She did it herself and came out looking like one of the Three Stooges."

In 1966, when Tina was a junior in high school, the family moved to Japan so tha Mona Lutz could be with her family, th girls could learn that side of their cultura heritage, and Walter Lutz could pursu his passion; his job representing Helen Rubenstein products to U.S. Army PX was just an excuse to hunt for bamboo.

It wasn't long before the two sisters fol lowed the lead of others in their high schoo for naval dependents and started modeling Under their mother's agenting, they be came such a hit that Tina gave up on To kyo's Jesuit Sophia University after just si months. Shiseido cosmetics put both girl under contract. "Tina and Bonny were th first Eurasian models to be hot in Japan i the sixties," says Jun Kanai. "Their face were all over, on every cover." Suddenl Tina was no longer tagging along as th little sister. "Japan was her chance to be he own person," says Bonny, "and we kind o traded places."

"I loved being there," Tina Chow onc told *Harpers & Queen*. "I didn't realiz then that I was a cross-breed." But afte four successful years of posing for Shi seido and doing runway modeling fo Matsuda and Issey Miyake, supermode Tina Lutz came to the conclusion tha things weren't quite so idyllic after all Commercial success did not mean cultura acceptance: "Gradually I found out thi terrible thing—that they don't want half breeds in Japan, not in fashion shows o anywhere. And when I knew that, I want ed to get out."

Enter Michael Chow. The first perso to tout her future husband to twenty year-old Tina was the late fashion illustra tor Antonio Lopez, who came to Tokyo t draw for a department store. "You hav to meet Michael—he's perfect for you," Lopez decreed. When the two somehow missed connections as Michael passe through Tokyo, Lopez fumed at her, " can't believe you blew it." Anothe chance presented itself about a year later in 1971, when Michael reappeared unde the guise of casting for a martial-arts film he was interested in directing, and met th Lutz sisters through a mutual friend, de signer Zandra Rhodes. The girls wer completely bowled over. "Both of u went 'Wow!' " Bonny remembers. "H was adorable, just beautiful, with lon blunt-cut hair parted in the middle. An so funny." Was it love at first sight "Yes, one of those," Michael Chow say today, adding cryptically, "and the rest i history."

By the time he met Tina, Michael ha studied architecture, struggled as a pain er, played bit roles in movies, become th

"I am going to be the best AIDS patient ever," Tina announced to friends.

proprietor of a go-go hairdressing salon, met and married three other wives—one for just a few days—owned four restaurants and a nightclub, and was on his way to becoming a millionaire. But then, Michael Chow was descended from an adventurer: his great-grandfather was a Scotsman who may have dealt in tea or opium in China—whichever, he made a pot of money. His granddaughter, Michael's mother, was a privileged and proper young woman whose feet were not bound and who was given a Western education. She scandalized her family by running off with Michael's father, Zhou Xinfang, a matinee idol of the Peking Opera in Shanghai who happened to be already married with three children. The couple settled in Shanghai and had three daughters before Zhou was divorced. Michael was the pampered second son in a very exalted and elite household. At one point after the Communist revolution, his father, who had become China's greatest classical actor, was said to be the highest-paid man in all of China. Zhou Xinfang wrote more than a hundred plays for the theater company he directed. His prestige was such that he was declared one of China's eight national treasures.

Michael wanted to be an actor, but his mother had other plans for him: in 1952, when he was only thirteen, he was sent to England along with his sister Tsai Chin. She studied at London's Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (later gaining theatrical fame in the role of Suzie Wong), and he was put in boarding school. Except for one visit his mother made in 1961, Michael Chow never saw his parents again.

Only much later would he learn that during the Cultural Revolution they were beaten and tortured almost daily. His father spent a year in prison; by the time he was released, his once proud and vivacious wife, who had been made to sweep the streets, was dead. Zhou's books were burned; the family lost everything. Michael's brother, William, who had followed in their father's footsteps to become an actor with the Peking Opera, spent five years in jail. "I'll never forget when Michael found out," says Bonny Lutz. "He just paced up and down the room repeating, 'My brother, William, spent five years in jail, my brother, William, spent five years in jail.' " Today Michael Chow simply says, "I am a professional refugee."

"He realized instinctively," his sister Tsai Chin wrote in her absorbing autobiography, *Daughter of Shanghai,* "that success meant media exposure and that exposure was most easily found by associating himself with the glamorous world that newspapers and magazines depended on for copy: the world of theatre, film, society, pop and such."

"I never meant it as a business—I wanted to create a happening," he says of the namesake venture he launched in London in 1968. The cynic in him said, "Chinese in the West can only do laundry or restaurants"; the entrepreneur said, "I want to communicate between East and West." The timing was perfect. London's culture quake—Mary Quant, the Beatles, the Stones—was forged by middle- and working-class kids who had no trouble admitting a Chinese immigrant into their midst. They needed a club, and Mr. Chow was just as innovative in its milieu as Carnaby Street was in fashion. It functioned as a stage set, like Rick's place in *Casablanca,* and Michael traded food for art by the likes of Jim Dine and Richard Smith. Moreover, the total package couldn't be copied. "The kitchen was Chinese, the waiters were Italian, and I was the only one who could communicate with both," says Michael. "I adopted the idea of British colonialism: divide and rule."

In his personal conquests, Michael was equally driven. He knew what he wanted, and he pushed pretty hard. He had gotten his previous wife, Grace Coddington, then of British *Vogue,* to marry him by sending out hundreds of wedding invitations without her knowing a thing about it. Now Michael couldn't wait to join the sweetly innocent Lutzes. "Our family was so important to him because he couldn't reach his own," says Bonny.

It wasn't long before Tina, wide-eyed and eager but already in possession of a superior and quirky elegance, joined him in London to begin a life of serious glamour. They married in 1973 and celebrated at Mr. Chow, where Bianca Jagger upstaged the blushing bride by arriving late with nine-year-old Tatum O'Neal, both decked out in long white dresses and wide-brimmed hats and carrying walking sticks. The bride was twenty-three—"but she was younger," says Michael Chow, "if you know what I mean."

The newlyweds flew to Los Angeles, where Jerry Moss, the *M* of A&M Records, was backing a Mr. Chow in Beverly Hills. It was, says Michael, "the first designer restaurant, light-years ahead," in a locale that still mostly knew only from red checked tablecloths and Chianti-bottle candlesticks. Clint Eastwood showed up at the opening. Moss brought in the pop stars. The British expatriate directors of Hollywood—Alan Parker, Adrian Lyne, Ridley Scott—soon found a new home. Billy Wilder, Neil Simon, and Steve McQueen and Ali MacGraw dropped in on Sunday nights. Anjelica Huston and Tina discovered they wore the same Shiseido perfume. Tina, on her first trip to California, was suddenly in the thick of Hollywood. "She was kind of like a teenager about it," says Nadia Ghaleb, Tina's closest girlfriend.

How could anyone be so adorable? "People used to go a lot just to see her—it was like her starring role," says Peter Schlesinger. "She was chic and beautiful, always smiling and cheerful. She was a wonderful greeter and made everybody feel they were her best friend—and because she was so glamorous it made you feel just great." If she didn't care for you, you'd never know it. "She would give a big hello, then come back and sigh, 'Oh, God,' " says Schlesinger. "But nothing more. She had that Oriental side—this great mask."

"She was holding court and serving you at the same time," says Nadia Ghaleb. "She was like the enchanted girl—nothing Tina ever did didn't get reviewed well. The restaurants didn't necessarily always get well reviewed, but Tina always got well reviewed."

Michael was a tough taskmaster—several people who worked for him referred to him as a "benevolent dictator." His sister Tsai Chin tried to work for him in the Los Angeles restaurant as "the family representative" and quit after six months. "Michael had worked extremely hard for

his success and was under enormous pressure," she wrote in her memoir. "He ran a tight ship and expected absolute obedience from his staff, which he always got. With me he acted the tyrannical patriarch, and even outside working hours he wanted utter control over my life. The male chauvinist pig was stuck with a female one."

Tina, of course, did not rebel. "She was unbelievably subservient," says a friend from the early days. "Basically, she had his identity," says Grace Coddington, who remained friendly with them both. "You have to be someone, but you can't be someone." But even with two children—China was born in 1974 and Maximillian in 1978—Tina was just as determined as Michael to make the business a success; at one point he was the proprietor of seven different restaurants and clubs in London. If business was off at lunch, "Tina would get on the phone and get Jerry Hall to come in. She was always arranging parties, but the parties took place at Mr. Chow." There were also plenty of hangers-on who knew that good-hearted and generous Tina was a soft touch—dozens ate for free. "A lot of those people she fed for years deserted her in the end," says Mark Walsh, a vintage-couture dealer with whom she worked closely for a decade. "She really felt bad about that."

Michael and Tina never spent money on fancy cars or country houses, choosing instead a luxuriously austere life-style, a very elevated "less is more." In the mid-seventies they settled into a town house on Clancarty Road with a moon gate leading into the dining room and one of the few swimming pools in central London. Each object was meant to radiate form. From his childhood Michael had always been an avid collector. Now he was commissioning portraits of himself and gathering important pieces of Art Deco furniture, but all sorts of objects held fascination for him. "It's not like today, when everybody knows something," he says. "In those days only three people knew Montblanc pens were chic."

The writer Marie Brenner remembers Tina vividly during the early years of the marriage: "She was a very innocent, very fragile girl moving through these beautiful rooms explaining every piece of furniture, and I'm thinking, There is something about putting this girl in this atmosphere that will ultimately do her in." Others saw nothing more sinister than an echo of *Pygmalion*. "Michael made her, taught her taste, but what was nice about Tina was that she was very down-to-earth," says Jun Kanai.

"She had innate good taste," Michael acknowledges. "I think it was master-teacher, but I didn't feel aware of it. My sister did remind me the other day that when she first met us, when she asked a question of Tina, Tina looked at me first." Yet he remembers that "at that age Tina already had a very good eye." Indeed, says Nadia Ghaleb, "Tina's eye was bulletproof—with objects, furniture, clothes, jewelry. Michael has great spontaneous instincts; she was the editor."

As time went on, there was great reverence for them as a couple. "It was always Mr. and Mrs. Chow, like they were glued together," says New York artist Sylvia Martins. Michael was busy amassing important Art Deco, Ruhlmann and Dunand furniture made in the twenties, and Tina had taken up collecting haute couture, Fortunys and Balenciagas. The Chows were united in their fanatic visual perfectionism. "Even her handwriting looked designed," says Peter Schlesinger. "Tina was so organized it was frightening," says Mark Walsh. "Her closets for her collection were beyond museums." The clothes hung in acid-free tissue and were spaced exactly. "The word 'style' is really lacking here—it's really balance, justness, and love of quality and respect for craftsmanship," says the photographer David Seidner. "Everything Tina did was so extraordinary, from the way she handled chopsticks to the way she packed her bag; everything was wrapped so beautifully, in little Japanese boxes, in perfect paper and ribbons—it was like a puzzle."

For Tina Chow, who made the best-dressed lists so many times she graduated into the B.D. Hall of Fame, all of it reflected a deeply held belief. She once told an interviewer that her mission in life was to banish ugliness. "You have either to bring beauty or ugliness," she said, "and you're not allowed to bring ugliness."

In retrospect, the dénouement for the sophisticated, gilded couple, so young and rich and charmed, began when they tried to live up to the lyrics from "New York, New York": "If I can make it there, I'll make it anywhere . . ." In 1978, when the economy in Britain appeared on the verge of collapse, Michael and Tina decided to move to America, and in a fury of work and terror they opened Mr. Chow in New York.

"New York wasn't good for either of them," says Nadia Ghaleb. "It was a big gamble," Michael concedes. But the restaurant took off like a rocket. During the early eighties, in those pre-AIDS moments of glittering bisexual punk, "Mr. Chow was extremely happening," says Paige Powell, who was then Andy Warhol's assistant. "You could come in crazy clothes—it was Fellini-like. It definitely drew a high-artistic crowd. Tina was very Zenlike, regal and serene, but very alluring, very removed."

In New York it was up to Tina to "keep the party going," often when neither one of them felt like partying at all. Michael's brother, William, was finally allowed to leave China for the U.S., a joyous event that proved to be fraught with hidden traumas. Michael became immersed in mounting a theatrical tribute to his father's memory. In August 1981, actors from China led by William performed Zhou Xinfang's plays for ten days at Lincoln Center. The engagement was widely praised, but the long-delayed grieving it stirred up in Michael brought on a brooding depression that lasted several years. "America did not work out the way Michael had hoped," says Eric Boman. "That [reliving of history] psychologically affected me," says Michael. "I felt racism, all kinds of stuff. After that I couldn't communicate in New York. I lost a lot of internal power."

Meanwhile, says Grace Coddington, "Tina had to cover up and put on a jolly face in the restaurant." Everything was proving difficult. The Chows purchased an apartment that had once belonged to a Satanist above the restaurant on Fifty-seventh Street, and in 1982 they began a major renovation, an ordeal few Manhattan marriages survive unscathed. What Michael and Tina ended up with was a museum for their collection of Art Deco. To some it was one of the most exquisite spaces extant. Others found it funereal, the atmosphere incredibly tense. "You become a slave to this stuff," says Mark Walsh. "You have to have the humidifier going, you have to live in complete climate control. If the kids nicked anything, it would be immediately sent out to be lacquered."

Nadia Ghaleb watched the Chows metamorphosing from a "whimsical, lighthearted twosome" who combed flea markets to "a major museum collector duo." Michael was getting bored with restaurants, and New York wasn't making him the toast of the town. "I think he had a chip on his shoulder about being a restaurateur," says Boman. "He saw himself cutting a larger figure." Meanwhile, Tina was fast becoming the darling of the downtown art moguls, a pal of bad boy

Tina told an interviewer that her mission in life was to banish ugliness.

Jean-Michel Basquiat, Andy Warhol, Kenny Scharf, Julian Schnabel.

By then, Tina had more male homosexual friends—for whom she was an object of worship—than female friends. According to Grace Coddington, the gay men's chorus, quick to size up the strains in the marriage, was forever undermining Michael. " 'You don't need him,' they'd say. 'Look at the way he treats you. Come out with us instead.' " Michael resented them and, according to Coddington, blamed them for everything that happened afterward.

"Tina at that point started to flourish," says Michael. "She connected better. I said, 'O.K., Tina, you have all the publicity. O.K., I'll be Mr. Hanae Mori' "—referring to the Japanese designer whose husband runs her business. "I did it consciously." Michael, ever more morose, disappeared from the restaurant. At one stage he spent virtually nine months in bed and gained a great deal of weight. Still, he kept tabs on everyone by watching them on the closed-circuit TV he had installed. Tina, her friends say, was drinking more champagne than usual. The atmosphere between them chilled.

"When he tried to get back into the restaurant," says Coddington, "no one knew him—it had become Tina's restaurant. She took it on because she had to, and he wanted it back."

"There would be dinner parties with her friends when nobody talked to him," says Walsh. "It was very bizarre. She was so much the center of attention."

They began to travel separately. Still, few suspected the depth of Tina's unhappiness, because she did not confide much in those days, and she never forgot her role at the restaurants. "When she was on, she was *so* on," says Walsh. "But when she was off, she was coming unglued. In a weird way Tina had no self-esteem." To some, Helmut Newton's photograph from that period, showing Tina in a Chanel gown, her wrists roped to the bar of Mr. Chow as Michael looks on warily, says it all. "That picture is their marriage," observes Peter Schlesinger. (Nonsense, says Newton: "Anyone who knows anything about me knows how much I like to tie women up.")

In January 1985, Michael and Tina moved to Los Angeles—definitely Michael's idea. He said that tending his collection in the newly done New York apartment was making him ever more obsessive and stifling his creativity. "I was a prisoner of Ruhlmann furniture. That's what depressed people do—they go around straightening the furniture."

But the move didn't seem to help. "They came to L.A. and they never quite hit a groove out here," says Jerry Moss sadly. Tina had never liked L.A. anyway, and the family ended up spending that summer back in New York. It was then that Andy Warhol started pressuring Tina to do something on her own, design a line of clothing, something. And it was then, as she was casting about for that something, that she had her fatal encounter with Kim d'Estainville during a visit to Paris.

For a long time Tina held back from beginning anything on her own. Certainly, her husband wasn't amenable—he needed her in the restaurants. And surrounded as she was by the highest-paid and most successful pop stars of art and fashion, whatever she did had better be pretty good.

But Warhol insisted. ("He always played the evil fairy," someone remarked.) He would phone Tina in the morning and say, "O.K., what are we doing today?" pushing her to begin. "Tina seemed so confident, and she *was* about her taste, but when it came to her own creativity, it took her a long time for it to come forth," says Maggie Salamone, who helped Tina restore her vintage-couture collection. "When I found out she was sick, it was so painful, because I felt like she was finally dealing with doing something on her own."

One day Warhol showed Tina two crystal pendants he'd been wearing and told her they had powerful healing properties. From then on she was hooked on beautiful rocks, and they went with her everywhere. After a proposal to work on an accessory line with the famed French bead embroiderer Lesage fell through in 1986, she decided to design jewelry using crystals. "She wanted people to be beamed up without even knowing it," says Ann Moss, who is married to Jerry Moss and also collects crystals. Michael Chow was not pleased: "She had the jewelry, I had nothing."

The pursuit of a career was clearly imperiling her marriage, but Tina forged on. In 1986 she finally learned to drive. "I think when she started driving we got into trouble," says Michael only semi-facetiously. He dates '86 as the year "Tina kind of went out in space with crystals and speaking of universal love. But what about your own children—you know what I mean? I wanted family, roots, all that boring stuff." By that time Tina's dear friend Antonio Lopez was dying of AIDS. The Chows took him in. Michael paid his medical bills and Tina nursed him, never knowing that by then she was already infected herself. She worked on AIDS benefits, helping Louisiana-born London socialite Marguerite Littman found the AIDS Crisis Trust in Britain.

By 1987, Michael admits, "there wasn't much of a marriage." Tina was flying around the world pursuing perfection in jewelry design. There was only one man, in Hong Kong, who could polish the hole that held the cord to her pendants. She worked with a bamboo master in Japan. "Nobody else could make those tiny perfect knots," says Bonny.

It was the year of living dangerously. She started an affair with Richard Gere, who excited her interest in Tibetan Buddhism and brought her into contact with the Dalai Lama. (According to Gere, it was five or six years ago that he and Tina had a relationship. Tina tested positive for H.I.V. in 1989. He has been tested for H.I.V. a number of times since he was first aware of the disease, and has tested negative every time.) "She was longing to express her own talent—she'd never had something that was just her own little oeuvre," says Bonny. "A spiritual search was beginning. The old was breaking up for the new. It was kind of like a bird molting."

"I was sheltered for a long time," Tina told a Texas newspaper while promoting her jewelry line a scant month before she collapsed in Tokyo. "I'm only now standing on my own two feet."

The death of Andy Warhol in February 1987, followed by those of Antonio Lopez in March of that year and Jean-Michel

Ciao, Tina

[illegible] in 1988, made Tina feel "that this circle around her, link by link, these people were evaporating," says Bonny. In April 1988, Tina legally separated from Michael. "All this made her want to be more than just the gorgeous fashion plate," says Bonny. "The times were definitely changing." On May 16, 1988, Tina Chow gave a quote, which now sounds truly eerie, to a *New York Times* reporter for a story on drugs going out of style in the fashion world: "For years I subsisted on a diet of espresso and champagne. Now I don't drink. I lost several friends to AIDS, and I felt my life slipping away while I continued to party. The fashion industry and the arts have been hit so hard by illness, many people are paying more attention to just sticking around." Tina Chow did not know there was a silent time bomb ticking inside her.

The news that his wife had contracted AIDS scared and shocked Michael. "I was at risk for a period of time, of course I was." He subsequently tested negative for H.I.V. and in January of this year married fashion designer Eva Chun. He describes the experience of going through Tina's illness and death as "a little like the Cultural Revolution, a little like what my parents went through."

Michael was present at Tina's deathbed, but the two never came to terms. "That's only for movie scripts. There was no forgiveness scene—it wasn't articulated like that." Could he look back on his relationship with Tina without rancor? Michael Chow had been staring out the glass doors in his Los Angeles living room toward the patio. He slowly turned his head around, took off his glasses, and looked straight at me.

"No," he said. "No, I cannot."

"I am going to be the best AIDS patient ever," Tina announced to friends once she could bear to admit that she had the disease, in the fall of 1989. She began to research the virus and document her illness with the thoroughness and meticulousness that characterized everything she attempted in life. But even Tina Chow, surely one of the most privileged females with AIDS in the world, was frustrated by the utter disregard the government and the medical community have shown so far toward women with AIDS.

Women with full-blown AIDS survive for a shorter time than men, some experts believe, owing to the fact that they are frequently diagnosed later than men. It is not known whether AZT and ddI, the two drugs approved by the F.D.A. for people who are H.I.V.-positive, affect women differently than men. In the heterosexual transmission of AIDS, which is increasing at a rate four to five times that of any other risk category for the disease, AIDS cases among women outstrip those among men: according to the most extensive study published in the United States on partners of people infected with the virus, women are up to seventeen times more vulnerable to being infected than men. "The questions of why AIDS happens any faster or slower in women and what its manifestations are—these questions are only now being tackled," says Dr. Farley Cleghorn, an AIDS researcher with the National Institutes of Health. (In the early years of the disease, 69 percent of those affected were gay men.) "Certainly the issue of women with AIDS came to light later, but what's lacking now for women is the initial high-powered organizational push gay men had. Women were not admitted to any clinical trials for AIDS until 1990, and the National Institutes of Health did not even begin an office of women and health until 1990." So far, it seems that the prominent women associated with fighting AIDS have not spoken up loudly enough for their own sex.

AIDS in women is complicated by the fact that it can often present itself initially with gynecological symptoms, such as yeast infections, pelvic inflammatory disease, and cervical cancer. "If a woman has had severe or repeated yeast infections," says Dr. Patricia Murray, who was one of Tina Chow's doctors, "her physician should be sure to do a more detailed sexual history." Yet so far the government's Centers for Disease Control has not accepted such symptoms as criteria for an AIDS diagnosis. "Tina thought it was terribly unfair that women's symptoms were not given more attention," says David Seidner. "For example, she was plagued by yeast infections, and she was resentful that there wasn't more attention to women and the disease." Despite her privileged status, Tina told her friends she often felt that as a woman with AIDS she had nowhere to turn. Says Seidner, "I remember her saying that she went to a meeting of an AIDS group in New York and she was the only woman. It made her feel uncomfortable. In certain instances she felt ostracized by groups who were supposed to be there for support."

Tina quickly decided not only that she was going to be a full participant in her treatment but also that she would eschew conventional Western medicine—rejecting AZT for a strict macrobiotic diet, holistic treatments, Tibetan medicines, and psychic healers. "Tina had a detailed, scientific approach to things, but there was a tendency to put a voodoo-hoodoo sense to it," says Nadia Ghaleb. As the disease progressed, Tina was forced at crucial moments to accept the conventional treatment of American doctors, but she would submit only to those who were willing to consult with her macrobiotic counselors, one of whom became her "case manager." At least a dozen doctors weren't interested. "Tina was probably lucky," says Bonny. "She had societal connections, she was well-to-do, and still it was hard for her to find doctors who respected her as a woman, as a person, as a participant in her care. She was supposed to follow blindly. Tina never followed; she asked too many questions."

Illness struck Tina when she was going through the final stages of what had become a very bitter divorce. Those fights continued while her relationship with Richard Roth fell apart. (Roth is now writing a screenplay about Tina Chow.) She kept the diagnosis hidden from the world at large, and for a long time she was unavailable to many who tried to contact her.

Tina told her children that she had AIDS over the Thanksgiving weekend in 1989. Even then it was supposed to remain a secret. The next day her eleven-year-old son, Maxie, called home crying, in a total panic. The teacher had asked the class what they wanted most for Christmas. Maxie's hand had shot up instantly: "I wish there could be a cure for AIDS so my mother could be cured." He was afraid he had done something terrible. "My darling," Tina answered, "this is the most wonderful thing to have asked for. Never feel bad about that."

"The greatest pain for Tina in all this was as a mother," says Bonny. "Not being able to look after her children on a daily basis was so hard." (The children now live with their father.)

Tina Chow was able to survive two and half years after the onset of critical symptoms, "a pretty long period of time that did beat the odds," says one of her doctors, Brian Saltzman, co-director of the AIDS inpatient unit at New York's Beth Israel Medical Center. While her restless search for treatment led her from a macrobiotic retreat in Pennsylvania to the beach in Hawaii, she also took the opportunity to re-evaluate her life spiritually, and she never stopped encouraging others. She even stayed in touch with Kim d'Estainville and offered him advice about their mutual illness. "I was going through a separation

and divorce," says Maggie Salamone, "and Tina counseled me about pain. She said the tendency was for the first year and a half to try to make a deal with God: If I do this, will you do that? She said she went through a long period of that."

Tina Chow was a fighter. "Patients do better if they get more involved in their care," says Dr. Saltzman. "Tina was one of the feistiest, most dedicated I've ever cared for, the most involved in her care, with the strongest will to live—and I've seen hundreds of AIDS patients." Tina came to Dr. Saltzman last May in an extremely weakened condition—she was on a rigid macrobiotic diet and she had a serious yeast infection. He prescribed protein and vitamin supplements, which she took for a short time before returning to a still terribly strict but modified macrobiotic regimen. Her yeast infection, which she described to Maggie Salamone as "an open sore all the way up to my belly button," eventually disappeared. "I starved it out of my system," she triumphantly told Mark Walsh. ("I would not say candida cleared through diet," says Dr. Saltzman. "I'm not sure I can support that medical claim.")

Richard Gere lent Tina his house in Westchester County for a few months last summer. From there she would have her driver load baskets of rocks, Tibetan furniture, pots and pans to prepare food, and her steamer into a red jeep to visit various close friends. "She gave very good hugs, long hugs at the end," says Eric Boman. "She wanted to draw strength from you."

One of Mark Walsh's tasks was to pick up the messages on her answering machine in New York. Often there weren't any. Although Tina's family was selflessly and exceptionally dedicated to her, as were a few close friends, many of the rich and famous, the kissy-kissy socials and the moochers Tina Chow had once delighted with her beauty and sparkle, had all but disappeared. "She felt a lot of people had abandoned her—and they did," says Seidner.

Meanwhile, Tina was also tending to her material cleansing process. The woman who had lived most of her life in appreciation of luxury, craftsmanship, and form blurted out one day, "It's all stuff!"

By late summer she seemed to be failing. "In August she said she couldn't stand the day-to-day struggle of it anymore," says Seidner. "She was very depressed and she wanted to die." Deep depression is common in terminally ill patients, and in her last months Tina Chow was no exception. According to Bill Spear, her case manager, the antidepressants prescribed had no effect. "She felt she had botched her life," says Boman. "She felt it had all gone wrong, and she didn't blame anyone except herself."

But in October, Tina made an astounding rally. At the insistent urging of Michele Bohana—an activist for Tibet in Washington and a friend who was unlike the visual aristocrats she was used to—she flew from Los Angeles to New York. The occasion was the appearance of the Dalai Lama for Kalachakra Initiation, a gathering of four thousand of the faithful to hear complex teachings and rituals. The Paramount theater at Madison Square Garden had been made to resemble a gigantic Buddhist temple, and for more than a week Tina sat through the grueling initiation and accompanying lessons. "There were seven straight days when His Holiness and other lamas spoke for ten hours," says Bill Spear, who accompanied her.

"You've really done something wonderful for me," Tina told Michele Bohana by the second day. "I brought her to His Holiness two to three days after she arrived," says Bohana. "When she went in and when she went out, there were perceptibly two different Tinas." The Dalai Lama personally gave her some Tibetan medicines and referred her to a very high lama, "a great meditator and practitioner of Tibetan Buddhism—very realized," says Bohana. The lama's counsel to Tina: "Put His Holiness in your heart. Heal yourself [and] all those others."

"When he said that, it was like a light bulb went on—she realized what she was there for," says Bohana. "If this woman had a regular life span, God knows what would have come out of Tina." Back in Los Angeles, Tina tried to put the lama's charge into practice. She decided she would endorse an AIDS hospice in Mexico which would be called Tina's House, and she renewed her commitment to volunteering at Project Angel Food, a privately funded organization that prepares and delivers meals to people with life-threatening diseases, mostly AIDS. Tina Chow was back in a very different kind of kitchen. "She was fairly ill," says executive chef Guy Blume, "but she had that really beautiful, soulful quality about her.... She would come in once a week for three or four hours; she was very brave. One day she even fainted, but she was smiling when she came to—she was very calm about everything. And she was still beautiful. One day she decorated the tops of all the food boxes—three hundred of them."

Early last December, Tina entered Saint John's Hospital in Santa Monica. She had contracted toxoplasmosis, a parasitic infection that sometimes produces brain lesions and strokelike symptoms. She lost vision in one eye, was partially paralyzed, and could barely speak. "By then we were no longer dancing around the subject of 'You're dying,' " says Bohana. "I tracked down three monks. When the monks came, Tina was happy. She managed to whisper, 'Oh, wow.' "

No one expected her to be able to leave the hospital, but she went home just before Christmas. "She was as clear as a bell," says Bohana, who had flown to L.A. "Tina couldn't speak, but she could look you in the eye. She spoke with her eyes. We talked about the end. I told her, 'Everything is done, His Holiness is notified, all prayers are done.' We locked eyes and recited prayers—she was totally and completely prepared."

When the end finally came, eleven days later, Tina was fully conscious, without any drugs, and surrounded by love. Her bed had earlier been brought into the living room of her Spanish-style house overlooking the sea, where she had once delighted in watching whales float by. Now she stared at a picture of the Dalai Lama and fingered a *mala*, a Tibetan rosary. Her mother, her sister, her family were at her bedside. China was leaning over her mother and hugging her when she died. The moment was very peaceful.

Even in dying, Tina Chow couldn't help looking elegant. Herb Ritts visited her in her last days, and recalls that she was perfectly turned out—"pressed men's boxer shorts, little tank top, and silk robe thrown over her shoulders." He held her hands. "Her hands were so beautiful that night." Toward the end of her life, says Ritts, Tina was becoming a different woman. "She'd be a lot freer with herself, not so into the society stuff. She began to be more of a woman using her own creative energies." And as she became more independent, he says, "Tina felt more a sense of herself. The memory of Tina that I will always have with me is seeing her one day in the sunshine out on her deck with no makeup on. She was kneeling down with her rocks and crystals all grouped around her, making her jewelry, smiling and very happy with it all. Her creativity was coming out." □

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Two memorial funds have been set up in Tina Chow's name. For information, contact: Tina's House Hospice Project, P.O. Box 931510, Los Angeles, California 90093, and The Tibet Fund, 107 East Thirty-first Street, New York, New York 10017.

Earl and Lyndon

(Continued from page 203) What was the K.G.B. doing after he came back? Earl, this is one of those events where all the roads intersect. There's a fellow named De Mohrenschildt. In the last fifteen years, he has probably worked for five or six intelligence services. He was Oswald's best friend in Dallas. I expect that Oswald was under so much pressure from so many intelligence agencies he probably wasn't even sure his own mind was still loyal to him. Earl, those fellows in intelligence are now wondering if they were the ones who drove him crazy enough to kill the president.

EARL: Yes, one can sense the repercussions.

LYNDON: No, it's worse than that. Fidel Castro could have done it.

EARL: He couldn't have. He would never have been so mad.

LYNDON: Maybe not, but Fidel don't know what his people were doing any more than we know what our people were doing. Earl, never let the next revelation leave your lips. This is as top-secret as it is going to get. I was briefed the other day in the most profound atmosphere of containment. The C.I.A. made eight attempts to kill Fidel. Now, whoever was telling them to do it, the point is, Fidel was going to perceive all that as coming from Kennedy. Bad enough? Earl, that is not the bottom of the pit.

EARL: Not?

LYNDON: The C.I.A. was employing the Mafia to do the job on Castro. All the while that Bobby Kennedy was trying to slam Jimmy Hoffa and Carlos Marcello into jail, we were running a goddamn Murder Incorporated in the Caribbean. There is no end to what the Mafia might have been doing. They could have had a gunman in Dallas sitting right next to Oswald. Or maybe he was staked out behind that fence overlooking Elm Street. But we can't nail the Mafia to the wall. They know too much.

EARL: I can see how delicate it will be to unearth the facts.

LYNDON: Earl, we cannot allow ourselves to get interested in facts.

EARL: What have I agreed to? Can I bear to keep to such an agreement?

LYNDON: It's awesome in the abyss. But here we are, Earl. Your vow has matched my vow. And here we are. We simply cannot allow the imputation that Oswald was any kind of intelligence agent. Earl, your commission may have to tread a long road, but you are bound to discover that Oswald was just a poor lonely guy who killed the president on his lonesome, alas, and Jack Ruby was a highly disturbed but chivalrous individual who didn't want Jackie Kennedy to be obliged to testify in court.

EARL: You are asking me to commit acts I have never engaged in before. Acts I despise.

LYNDON: Bullshit, Earl! Nobody is as honest as they believe themselves to be. Show me a lawyer who hasn't steered a case.

EARL: This is not a case. This is a fact-finding commission at the highest level.

LYNDON: Well, you are here and I am here to protect this country. We are sitting on a powder keg installed in a latrine. If that barrel ever blows, this nation will be subjected to unconscionable spew. I warned you, Earl. I am looking for a great American.

EARL: You are asking me to contravene the purpose of the commission which will bear my name.

LYNDON: Yes, and I am asking you in the name of a higher purpose. I want you to protect our nation. We have a half-stable public out there. It pays never to forget that we Americans are the rejected of the earth. They didn't want us over there in Europe, so we came here. Nobody was around to groom us. We had to learn how to sprout on the soil available. No skillful hands tended us. We grew up as weeds, therefore, and as weeds did this great nation develop. So, we wish to survive. If my roots have got to strangle your roots in order for me to stay alive, well then, don't bother to look, it's a done deed.

EARL: That is a full description of ruthlessness.

LYNDON: We are here to reassure the populace. That has become our mightiest function. Earl, I will be blunt. You have to dead-ass the inquiry. You have to slide the facts around. By that means, you can give us what we need—a world that makes sense. Because everybody understands lonely people who go crazy for no reason. It'll get us feeling right about things again. Face up, buddy, you have to go in the tank.

EARL: Go in the tank? If there is a heaven, I hope it is not hearing us now.

LYNDON: Heaven approves of this, Earl. It's all right. You can take the dive. Hypocrisy has its own integrity. You will find that you shit better when this is all over. That is my private guarantee.

[*He puts his arm around Warren's shoulders and walks him out of the room.*]

From *The New York Times*, February 5, 1964:

Yesterday, in discussing whether testimony taken by the commission would be made public, Mr. Warren said: "Yes, there will come a time. But it might not be in your lifetime. I am not referring to anything especially, but there may be some things that involve security. This would be preserved but not made public." □

Excerpt on page 200 from *The Memoirs of Chief Justice Earl Warren*, by Earl Warren, © 1977 by Nina E. Warren as executrix of the Estate of Earl Warren. Used by permission of Doubleday, a division of Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc.

Robert Morgenthau

(Continued from page 173) fact, unwilling to testify at the time, and that they needed more time to build the case.)

Blum knew there were many other areas to explore—he had been told by a witness that B.C.C.I. was the secret owner of First American. Now he became convinced that he was being thwarted by peculiar maneuvers on the part of Clifford and Altman. He also believed that something untoward was going on at the Justice Department. The number of agents assigned to help him investigate the B.C.C.I. case had mysteriously dwindled; witnesses were telling him they had heard B.C.C.I. lawyers were bragging in the London office that they had torpedoed Senator Kerry's hearings. When Florida B.C.C.I. executive Amjad Awan was subpoenaed, he told an undercover agent that Altman was advising him to flee the country. Blum was convinced that Clifford and Altman were stalling delivery of documents that he had subpoenaed for the Senate. They were, he believed, "feigning complete ignorance of what it was we were going after.

"The thing that infuriated me was that, at the same time we had a subpoena out, there were people inside [B.C.C.I.] who were telling us that documents were being shredded in the bank's Washington office because we had issued a subpoena. That angered me greatly," Blum told me.

"I said to Morgenthau, 'This is the biggest bank fraud in the history of the

world. You have a bank that has no capital—in essence it has borrowed money from itself to create capital. It has a whole system of fake shares and fake deposits. What they have done is conceal the ownership of other banks and falsify their statements.''

Morgenthau sat at the desk that day smoking his cigar, leaning back in his frayed blue leather office chair. The D.A.'s desk is a legend with court reporters; it is covered with a jumble of motions, invitations, subpoenas, pleas, toddlers' paintings, address books, menus, and résumés. Morgenthau's papers tower in great unruly drifts, as if they dated back to Abe Beame's administration. At press conferences a tattered plastic sheet is thrown over the whole mess. In fact, Morgenthau's inner sanctum is a charming dustheap of memorabilia, a setting out of *film noir*. The walls are covered with awards and framed letters from F.D.R. and Lord Lothian to Henry Morgenthau. There are fake Dufy paintings Morgenthau once rounded up in an art-fraud case, and photos lovingly inscribed by all the Kennedys, as well as pictures of Morgenthau's two young children and his second wife, Lucinda Franks, a forty-five-year-old former *New York Times* reporter who won a Pulitzer Prize.

''Blum said, 'I don't think this is going to be prosecuted,' '' Morgenthau recalls. ''I said, 'Is there evidence of money-laundering through New York?' and he said, 'Yes, and in addition there is evidence that B.C.C.I. controls First American.' He said, 'If you don't do anything about it, the whole thing is going to be dropped.' ''

Michael Cherkasky, Morgenthau's chief of investigations, was incredulous. ''Blum's story was ridiculous!'' Cherkasky later told me. ''[He said] the entire Third World was involved and that they had bought and sold entire governments and maybe some United States officials. It was a fascinating tale—this guy was telling us the world was corrupt!''

Cherkasky, whose father was once the head of Montefiore hospital, has known Bob Morgenthau his whole life. Now forty-one, he is as close to the D.A. as one of his own sons. ''I said to Morgenthau, 'Boss, do you want to do this? I don't think it is going anywhere.' ''

Cherkasky's tone was flat—he was mired in a complex prosecution of John Gotti and he envisioned all the hideous problems that could come with a case such as B.C.C.I., the years of unanswered subpoenas, the Saudi witnesses cloistered in the Third World, the documents that would never appear from the Cayman Islands to Pakistan. And Cherkasky worried: Where was the jurisdiction? How could a local D.A. afford the cost of a worldwide investigation? How could the New York County prosecutor indict an international bank of money-launderers? ''If New York is the banking center of the world and the money is laundered through here, there is our jurisdiction,'' Morgenthau said that day, but his motivation may have been more complicated. Here at last was his chance to outdo his old headline-grabbing adversaries in Rudolph Giuliani's former office at the Southern District. ''If the United States attorney is not doing it, I'm doing it,'' Morgenthau added. He turned to Cherkasky. ''Who do we want to do it?''

''There's only one guy in our office to do this: John Moscow,'' Cherkasky said, speaking of his top investigator.

Moscow, like Cherkasky, has long and special ties to his boss. His father, Warren Moscow, was for many years the chief political correspondent for the *Times*, and later was director of the Housing Authority for Mayor Robert Wagner. Moscow, forty-three, has the hooded eyes and knowing demeanor of a man who understood by the time he was in fifth grade where every body was buried. He went to Harvard Law School, but has come to terms with earning $90,000 a year as a prosecutor, because he enjoys solving complicated crimes. In the office, Moscow is considered a brilliant strategist and moral ''zealot.'' He is also a devoted family man who met his wife after she served on the jury of a case he was trying. Almost nothing surprises him. His favorite expression is a deadpan ''Very interesting.'' Moscow's speech patterns are often so dense that reporters joke they need subtitles to understand him. When he talks, he often rocks back and forth, as if the pressure of such deliberation causes an involuntary body tremor.

Over the next two years, against every obstacle, Moscow would almost single-handedly do the detective work that would help Morgenthau crack the B.C.C.I. case. ''Morgenthau and Cherkasky called me and said that Blum had said B.C.C.I. was corrupt and that it owned First American. They said they wanted me to take a look at it. So I said, 'Well, other than the fact that the bank is dirty, is there anything more that you want? Any other information you guys have?' Their answer was 'Not a whole lot,' '' Moscow told me. ''The boss did not have a clue how big this case was going to be.''

Robert Morgenthau's skill as a prosecutor rests on complex white-collar investigations. He has the ability to look at many unrelated transactions—bank records, stock movements, and phone logs—and perceive a pattern of activity that no one else will see. Most prosecutors take evidence, pull the lawbook off the shelf, find a statute that fits the crime, and file an indictment. Morgenthau often doesn't wait for a crime to appear—he intuits when someone is up to no good.

Soon after Blum left his office, Morgenthau looked up First American in *Moody's* stock guide. This was his best hope at jurisdiction: First American had forty-three branches in the state. ''The stock in First American Bankshares was owned by a Delaware holding company, which was owned by a Netherlands holding company, which in turn was owned by a holding company in Curaçao,'' Morgenthau told me. On top of all of these names was the name Clark Clifford. Morgenthau was well aware of his reputation as a point man for presidents. That day, staring at *Moody's*, Morgenthau knew ''somebody was trying to hide something.''

Morgenthau would later have lunch with the head of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. ''How much money passes through New York in a single day in wire transfers, about one and a half to two trillion dollars?'' he asked. ''Try three and a half trillion on a quiet day,'' the head of the Federal Reserve replied. ''If someone is trying to hide a couple of hundred million dollars a day in the money stream, here was how to do it,'' Morgenthau later told me.

John Moscow started with a very simple premise. ''We kept asking one basic question: 'Who owns B.C.C.I. and where did the money come from?' We never got to the advanced questions. We got stuck on the simple questions and on 'Who owns First American?' '' One day that spring of 1989, a British investigator was in New York. By chance Moscow ran into him at John Gotti's old hangout, Antica Roma, an Italian bistro near the courthouse. ''What do you know about B.C.C.I.?'' he asked the investigator in the small, dim room. ''They are the world's biggest money-launderers,'' the investigator said. Moscow spoke to contacts at the bank clearinghouses in New York: ''The word 'crook' came up a lot.''

It was a turbulent time in the D.A.'s office. A few days after Blum's visit, a young female investment banker from

Robert Morgenthau

Salomon Brothers was raped, brutally beaten, and left for dead in Central Park. Morgenthau and his chief of sex crimes, Linda Fairstein, were besieged by reporters. Moscow was busy, too, preparing a complex murder-and-fraud case, and B.C.C.I. was still a distant mystery.

Then, in July, a conference in Cambridge, England, on money-laundering, organized by the Commercial Crime Unit of the Commonwealth Secretariat, caught Moscow's attention. One case involving B.C.C.I. was on the program. He and a colleague hopped on a plane.

Soon after Moscow arrived in Cambridge, however, a new program was suddenly announced for the seminar — B.C.C.I.'s money-laundering history had vanished from the schedule. Moscow quickly learned that a high official from B.C.C.I. was in Cambridge. "I went to the director's office and I said, 'How come this speech is not being given?' and they said, 'It's just not.' There was no point in making a scene." But Moscow left England convinced, as he later put it, that "the fix was in."

Back in New York, Moscow interviewed an informant who gave him startling news. "He told me that B.C.C.I.'s owners were all nominees. . . . [He said that] Abedi had gone around the Gulf and gotten these sheikhs, some of whom didn't have a pot to piss in, to be nominee owners. He got them to agree that he could use their names on anything as long as they were not economically liable. He didn't ask them to put money in it, he just said, 'Let me use your name.' " Moscow immediately seized on this information. Phony ownership—and, later, phony loans—was the classic way a crooked bank perpetrated a fraud.

Moscow contacted the Serious Fraud Office in England, requesting documents from B.C.C.I.'s London headquarters. "Will you help us?" he remembers asking. But the Serious Fraud Office wanted nothing to do with the allegations of a local prosecutor. "They told me that they had no interest."

Moscow then called Altman's hand picked lawyers, Lawrence Barcella and Lawrence Wechsler—"the Larrys," Moscow calls them—who had negotiated B.C.C.I.'s money-laundering plea in Tampa. Barcella had persuaded the bank officials to avoid a trial. "You were going to have a bunch of dark men with funny accents facing a bunch of old people," he told them, according to James Ring Adams and Douglas Frantz's new book, *A Full Service Bank*. Moscow said to Barcella and Wechsler, " 'We would like to know who owns this bank.' They did not want to answer. I said I had heard that there was a problem with the capital structure of the bank and I wanted to know, 'Does this bank have the money that it represents to have?' They told me that they did not know if they were permitted to disclose the existence of the capital records; they did not know if they existed, and they did not know if there was any evidence of who had purchased the stock." (Barcella remembers a different exchange: he says he told Moscow that, as far as he knew, the bank's audit records were in London and subject to bank secrecy laws.)

Wechsler and Barcella, now in private practice, had worked for some years in Washington as federal prosecutors. Wechsler is a childhood friend of Robert Altman's and often spends his Sundays watching Redskin games at the immense estate of Altman and his wife, Lynda Carter. Wechsler and Barcella represent the old-boy network; they are part of an endemic Washington "revolving door" culture. (Barcella, for example, was first a star federal prosecutor who went after renegade ex–C.I.A. agents; later, as a white-collar lawyer, he represented Antigua in its own mini–B.C.C.I. scandal, the shipping of machine guns from Israel to the Colombian drug cartel; he is now chief counsel for the House investigation of the "October Surprise"—a case in which a key figure banked at the London office of B.C.C.I.) Moscow might be trying a case against men who were piped into the thoughts and secrets of friends in the Department of Justice. The two Larrys would know every loophole and soft spot.

But Moscow now knew he was onto something significant. "When bank lawyers tell me that they don't have a record of its capital infusions or the stock-transfer records and can't say that it kept records of its deposits. . . We are not talking about the Chase bank going back to 1799—and they probably would have had all those records! We are talking, at that point, about a seventeen-year-old bank!"

A few months ago at the home of Clayton and Polly Fritchey, Clark Clifford was honored at a small dinner with close friends. Only ten people were invited to the Fritcheys' house, which had long been an adjunct social headquarters for the intellectual elite of the Democratic Party. The dinner party was intended to buck up an old friend. The Fritcheys knew that Clifford had been keeping to himself, immersed in the scandal that threatened to ruin his reputation.

The Fritcheys and the Cliffords went back forty years or more in Washington politics; they had seen scandals come and go. At the appropriate moment, Clayton Fritchey, almost ninety years old, stood up to give a toast. He was careful to talk about the past, not the present; even Clifford's intimates were confounded by his role in this ugly mess. But when Clifford stood up to respond, he seemed compelled to speak about his problems. His eyes filled with tears. "I have been asking myself over and over again, Where did I go wrong? What mistake did I make? Have I lost it? What clue did I overlook?" he reportedly said.

Alongside his skills as a corporate lawyer, Clark Clifford has for years relied on solipsism. The essence of his Washington law practice has always been his name and his Rolodex. He has made certain phrases his signature: "based on my years in government"; "based on my trust." In 1981, when he stood before the Federal Reserve to vouch for the acquisition of First American by a group of Arab investors, he invoked every bit of his personal prestige. Testifying before the Senate Subcommittee on Terrorism, Narcotics, and International Operations last October, Clifford again stressed his credibility. "My word has been important here for a great many years. . . and I ask you to take it."

"Put yourself in the minds of the men of the Federal Reserve," the former U.S. comptroller of the currency John Heimann told me. "Clark Clifford comes in and he says, 'You have my word that B.C.C.I. will have nothing to do with First American.' What could they have said? 'I accept your word, sir,' or 'Are you a liar?' "

Before the Senate subcommittee Clifford said, "At one source that I checked, they indicated that the United States was sending, at the time, $70 to $80 billion a year for the purchase of crude [oil] from the Middle East. And as far as our Government was concerned, it would be their preference that as much of the money flow back to the United States as possible . . . So that there was no objection leveled at the time to [the] effort by this group of Middle Easterners to acquire an American bank."

When Clifford attempted to explain his failure to suspect any wrongdoing by B.C.C.I., his testimony strangely echoed his words at the Fritcheys' dinner. "You may rest assured that I have combed my memory over and over and over in that

gard. I do not recall an instance, I do
ot recall any act on the part of anybody, I
not recall any evidence being brought
our attention which would alert me to
e criminal conspiracy that was going on.
"At the same time, I still have an un-
mfortable feeling about it. Why didn't I
nse it in some way? I would have want-
to. I have sensed it in other instances in
st experience. So that is a purely per-
nal approach to it but it helps you un-
rstand it better."

A few days earlier, Abdur Sakhia, the
rmer head of the Miami B.C.C.I. office
d one of the most important B.C.C.I.
fficials in the country, had been ques-
ned by the Senate subcommittee.

Senator Pressler: Now, in 1984, did you
arn of reports that BCCI was involved in
ug money laundering? I believe you testi-
ed that you did, through Senator Paula
awkins [of Florida]. However, can you de-
ribe how you learned of BCCI's involve
ent and what you did about it?

Sakhia. Sir, in sometime in . . . 1984, I got
call from Mr. Abedi on Saturday morning,
ry early Saturday morning, at my apart-
ent in Miami. . . . He told me that Senator
ula Hawkins, along with some other Sena-
rs or officials, had visited Pakistan and
et General Zia, and she had told to General
a that besides the smuggling of drugs from
kistan etcetera etcetera, there was also
oney laundering being done by a Pakistani
nk out of Grand Cayman. . . . So then
eneral Zia blew his top and said, "Look,
u are spoiling our relationship with the
S. . . . and our aid is in jeopardy. Why are
u doing this?"

Sakhia testified that he had rushed to
ashington to try to calm Senator Haw-
ns. When he arrived, however, she
emed to have lost interest in the affairs
B.C.C.I. and dismissed him after a
ort talk. She then arranged for Sakhia to
eet with a representative from the Jus-
e Department and another from the
ate Department. They told Sakhia that
C.C.I. was "not under investigation."
e wondered why, but he noticed that by
te 1985 Abedi had become confident
at the bank would be able to expand in
e United States. "My own impression,"
khia testified, "is that a deal had been
uck somewhere."

"Did anybody put that idea in your
ad?" asked Senator Kerry.

"No," he said. "Again, in that cul-
re, you understood a lot of things,
hether you were told or you were not
d, but you understood a lot of things."
khia would later learn that his hunch
out a deal had been correct: under Wil-
m Casey, the C.I.A. was using B.C.C.I.
a conduit for covertly supplying arms
to the Nicaraguan contras and the Afghani resistance. And Senate investigators would later find a 1985 check from B.C.C.I. to General Zia in the amount of 40 million rupees ($2.5 million).

By the mid-1980s, Sakhia was meeting frequently with Altman. On one occasion in 1988, he brought the new head of the American desk in London, Dildar Rizvi, to see Altman about B.C.C.I.'s plans for expansion in California. Afterward, Rizvi asked if Clifford was in the office, as he wanted to "pay his respects." The exchange was quick. "Mr. Rizvi briefed him that now we were going ahead with our plans in California and Mr. Clifford . . . said little jokes, political jokes, other jokes. And he said, what strikes out in my mind is, 'Mr. Rizvi, welcome aboard. We will tell more lies now.' " At the time, Sakhia testified, he thought Clifford was joking, "but in the present context it's no more a joke."

In meetings with the Federal Reserve, Clifford referred to Kamal Adham deferentially as "His Excellency."

Clifford later attacked Sakhia's remark. "It was an outrageous statement," he told the Senate subcommittee. "It is grotesque. It is totally and categorically false."

By the late 1970s, Clifford knew his way around the Middle East. It was a time in Washington when there was a great deal of concern about foreign bribery; Clifford was already acting as counsel to B.C.C.I. when he agreed to represent McDonnell Douglas in a 1978 case involving massive bribery to Pakistan. McDonnell Douglas was accused of bribing a relative of President Ali Bhutto to obtain contracts to build planes for the state-owned Pakistan International Airlines. Clifford, a childhood friend of the chairman of McDonnell Douglas in St. Louis, was called in to strike a corporate plea deal.

Although there was no direct link between McDonnell Douglas and B.C.C.I., there were odd crossovers and coincidences which suggested Clifford's awareness of the possible consequences of doing business in Pakistan and the Middle East. Kamal Adham, the alleged bagman for bribes made in the Middle East by Boeing, McDonnell Douglas's arch-rival, was already a Clifford client and would later become a principal shareholder of First American. A relative of King Faisal of Saudi Arabia and head of the Saudi secret police during one of its most repressive periods, Adham had also been the paymaster for Anwar Sadat and, according to investigators, was used by the C.I.A. for information gathering. He had a courtly manner and was often treated like a pasha: in meetings with the Federal Reserve, Clifford referred to Adham deferentially as "His Excellency." In the same meetings, Clifford characterized Adham as "a prominent businessman in Saudi Arabia" and said, "I have not heard one whisper of criticism against this man."

How did a lawyer who had once advised presidents wind up representing a shady power broker like Kamal Adham? Clark Clifford has the braided personality of a man of contradictions. He lives relatively modestly and prides himself on wearing an old fedora and eating a tuna-fish sandwich for lunch at a Peoples Drug store near his office. At the same time, he has long seemed to charge more than any other lawyer in Washington. He virtually invented the notion of modern lobbying — when he left the Truman White House, one of his first clients was Howard Hughes. "It was rather obvious" that Clifford used the contacts he made in the White House to build up his career as a superlawyer, Harry Truman's daughter, Margaret Truman, told me.

Clifford moved through Washington with the grace of a dancer. "Washington is a city of minefields," he used to tell his clients. If a client was in an ethical dilemma, Clifford had a favorite bromide: "He would say, 'You don't stop to think about whether or not this violates the criminal code, just think about how it would play on the front page of the *Times* or *60 Minutes*,' " said a longtime friend.

The former Israeli ambassador Abba Eban, who knew Clifford in both the Truman and Johnson administrations, remem-

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lers an "informal young man" serving President Truman fearlessly, standing up to General George Marshall's resistance to recognizing Israel. Twenty years later, when Eban went to see Clifford, then Johnson's secretary of defense, he was astonished by the change in his personality. Clifford was "rather stiff," Eban told me. "I had to say, Mr. Secretary, this, and, Mr. Secretary, that..." Eban was startled at how Clifford's job had changed his attitude, as if there were no underlying strong identity.

"The French have a phrase, *déformation professionnelle*," Eban told me. Loosely translated, it means "your job defines your perspective. With [Clark Clifford], I have never seen a more dramatic example of that." He was a man, Eban told me, who decided to "worship his master."

Nevertheless, by the 1960s, Clifford had become a man of immense power and prestige. He was called "Superclark" and delighted in his role as presidential adviser. He was a member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, and even before he became secretary of defense, Clifford was often in Lyndon Johnson's White House, advising him privately about the Vietnam War. As the public mood in the country became overwhelmingly violent and sour, Clifford urged the president to announce a cessation of all bombing. When Johnson took his advice, Clifford believed it was his finest hour.

It has become received wisdom for Clark Clifford's friends to explain his involvement in B.C.C.I. as the last gasp of an old man desperate to hang on to power. A popular theory is that Clifford and Altman became "prisoners of the enormous fees" they were earning in their dual—and perhaps conflicting—roles as First American bank executives and counsel to B.C.C.I. In one year alone, they received $4 million in fees. Clifford's friends blame Robert Altman for leading him, as one told me, "down the garden path," as if Clifford, meeting his Eve Harrington, had lost his cunning.

Investigators have another theory of Clifford's involvement with Abedi and Kamal Adham: it was, in Washington terminology, not a payoff, but a "bundle" or "package" in which everyone operated according to aligned interests.

Clifford had strong ties to the Carter administration, which was attempting to negotiate peace talks between Israel and the Arab world. And on Labor Day 1977, Jimmy Carter called Clifford with a problem, according to *The Washingtonian*. "My budget director, Bert Lance, is in trouble," Carter told him. Lance was being accused by a Senate committee of running a bank in Georgia that was, according to the article, "rife with insider deals, kited checks, and six-figure overdrafts." Clifford assigned "Lancegate" to his star junior colleague, thirty-one-year-old Robert Altman, who viciously attacked the integrity of the senators. The press bannered the hearings, and, surprisingly, Lance and Altman emerged as winners, although Lance was forced to resign.

Soon after Lance and Altman triumphed, Lance brought Abedi into the offices of Clifford's law firm. When Clifford was introduced to Abedi, he perhaps met his final and ultimate master. "Mr. Abedi was interested in establishing a presence in the U.S.," Bert Lance told me. "He had some other Washington law firm representing him, and I just felt that...Mr. Clifford could serve his purpose well. I introduced them. Mr. Abedi was impressed with Mr. Clifford and Mr. Clifford was impressed with Mr. Abedi." Moreover, each needed something from the other—Abedi, the access that Clifford's reputation could buy, and Clifford, Abedi's Middle Eastern webs. With Abedi and Adham, Clifford could operate in the back channels, as if he were still a shadow member of the government.

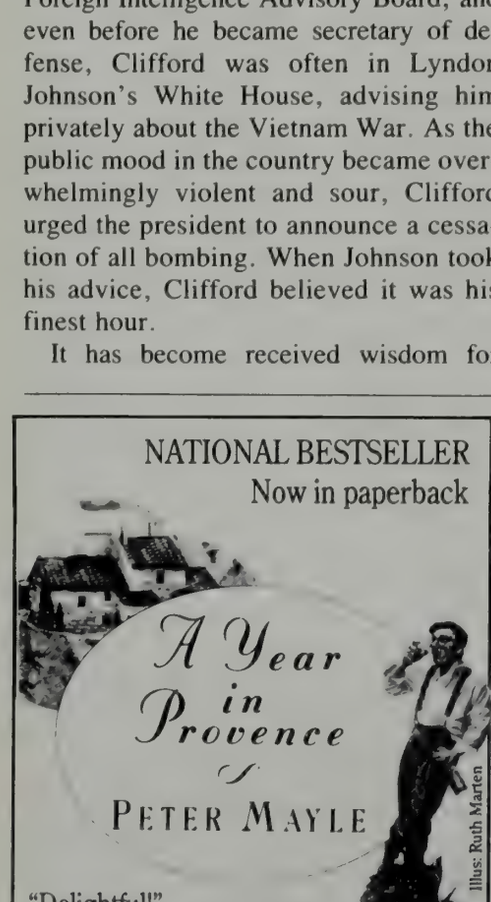
Kamal Adham, according to investigators, persuaded the other Arab leaders to allow Egyptian president Sadat to participate in the 1978 Camp David peace talks, the signal achievement of the Carter presidency. Here was a perfect Washington package: In order for Sadat to attend the peace talks, "he needed to be sure he wouldn't be isolated and cast out by the rest of the Arab world," according to an investigator. "That assurance is part of what Adham could deliver." In return, government regulators would allow the Gulf sheikhs to invest in First American bank.

Over and over, Clifford would later repeat, "I have talked to people at the highest levels of government and they want this to happen." Pressed by Senator John Kerry in the most recent hearing about whom exactly Clifford meant by the "highest levels of government," he waffled. Someone at the State Department, someone at the Commerce Department. Altman's answer was equally opaque: he recalled "a conversation we had with Arthur Burns...who was now then the chairman of the Federal Reserve," and another conversation with Senator Stuart Symington, an old friend of Clifford's.

An unexplained mystery of the B.C.C.I. affair is the relationship between the C.I.A. and Abedi. In testimony before the Senate, Robert Altman said he was aware "that the C.I.A. has maintained accounts at First American," but Clifford denied any knowledge of specific C.I.A. connections he was questioned about.

Starting as early as 1978, government officials were aware of B.C.C.I.'s controversial reputation. Bert Lance had a strong early warning that B.C.C.I. might be a troublesome client for Clifford's law firm. In the early 1980s, Lance was driving Abedi back to his hotel from a conference on the Middle East that Jimmy Carter had organized at Emory University. "[Abedi told me], 'I think there is something I need to tell you about just so that you will be aware of it.' He said that ever since Ronald Reagan had been sworn in as president he had been on the C.I.A. watch list and that his every movement was under surveillance. [He said that] when he came into the country many times he was hassled and put into holding rooms at different points of entry."

Afterward, Lance testified, Abedi never spoke of the problem again. Around the same time, Abedi and Casey began meeting secretly at the Madison Hotel in Washington, according to NBC News. Like Sakhia, Bert Lance was convinced that William Casey had made a deal with Abedi that would shield B.C.C.I. fro



investigation as long as Casey was running the C.I.A.: "They didn't become crooks until after Casey died."

It is often said that Bob Altman was the son Clark Clifford never had; but, more than that, they appeared to be alter egos. "I think Mr. Clifford saw a lot of himself in Bob," Bert Lance told me. From the beginning, Altman was dazzled by Clifford. "Robert had never seen such a high concentration of savoir faire," a friend recalls. The protégé seemed to exhibit his own brand of *déformation professionnelle*. Perhaps unconsciously he even began to imitate Clifford's gestures and stentorian tones. He affected dark double-breasted suits. One reporter who interviewed him during Lancegate observed, "Altman seemed like he was wearing his father's suit."

As a child, Altman had been a brainy "nerd," a close family friend remembers. His parents were highly competitive lawyers who lived in the pleasant Washington neighborhood of Cleveland Park. As a law student at George Washington University, Altman worked at Clifford & Warnke and later joined the firm.

Altman led the takeover battle to buy Financial General bank for the group of Arab businessmen who became the nominal owners. They changed the name of the bank to First American, and, with Clifford and Altman's assistance, got government approval to open its doors. Clifford became the chairman of the new bank, and Altman the president. Clifford's wife, Marny, would later tell a close friend how impressed her husband had been with the perks of the bank job. "One of the things that impressed him the most was the very large office and two huge limousines he received," she reportedly said. When Clifford resigned as chairman of First American, in the wake of the B.C.C.I. scandal, he was said to have asked Nicholas Katzenbach, the new head of the bank, if he could buy one limousine.

Summer 1990: As the scope of the B.C.C.I. investigation grew, the Morgenthaus' Park Avenue apartment became "the D.A.'s office, Upper East Side," says Lucinda Franks, who was working at home, trying to finish a novel. "There were more and more secret phone calls. Many people around the country who could not talk to their law-enforcement agencies could speak to Bob at home." People were constantly calling Morgenthau on a private line. That August, on Martha's Vineyard, Morgenthau "would frequently disappear for hours at a time to talk with secret sources," Franks told me.

Back at the office, John Moscow hit on one of the first pieces of hard evidence of bank chicanery. It was, ironically, a small-time Mob loan that First American's holding company had arranged for a restaurant in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Combing through reams of documents, Moscow noticed peculiarities in several accounts. "We issued subpoenas for six accounts," he said. "There were three Mob-related loans and two related-party transactions, a form of fraud where people are loaning money to themselves. Three Mob loans alone seemed to justify the indignation at B.C.C.I."

Moscow was also trying to understand the complicated ownership of B.C.C.I. and to unravel what had gone on in a Tampa customs investigation. He had been told that, a few years earlier, a Tampa government investigator had heard hours of undercover tapes concerning the true ownership of First American. The investigator had flown to Washington to interview Clifford and Altman. Altman had hedged with the investigator; he had then attempted to make an appointment with Clifford, but Clifford had refused to see him. The Tampa investigator had then received a phone call from his boss. He was told that he was doing the money-laundering investigation only and not to follow this up.

From the beginning, Altman was dazzled by Clifford. "Robert had never seen such a high concentration of savoir faire."

Later, a crisis had developed in Tampa around the undercover operation of Tampa customs agent Robert Mazur. Mazur testified to the Senate that massive amounts of money moved through B.C.C.I. in Tampa from Colombian drug traffickers. He believed that "there were records in the Miami [office of B.C.C.I.] that would have related to, at least in part, the association between BCCI, First American, and the National Bank of Georgia." But as Mazur tried to press the federal government to prosecute, strange things began to happen, which threatened his cover: federal warrants in Detroit described the undercover operation in detail; a Houston surveillance was apparently compromised; in New York City, undercover agents were detected by Colombian traffickers, as if they had been tipped off. "I think there were times when a pause occurred [in the investigation] because of the apparent influence of someone," Mazur testified.

Not only would the Tampa U.S. attorneys let Mazur down, they would also thwart Morgenthau's investigation. By the summer of 1990, Moscow had grown frantic trying to obtain hundreds of documents from Tampa. He turned to Morgenthau for help. A series of faxes traveled back and forth between Tampa and New York, and, Michael Cherkasky remembers, Robert Genzman, the Tampa U.S. attorney, "sent letters that were insulting to Morgenthau." In one instance Genzman wrote Morgenthau that if he gave him any papers Morgenthau would have to agree "to obey the laws of grand-jury secrecy," says Cherkasky. "No one has to tell Robert Morgenthau to obey the laws." In private, Morgenthau commented, "That S.O.B. is obstructing me. We are going to do this case anyway."

That same summer, John Moscow called Robert Altman. He was surprised when Altman answered his own telephone at the office. "We're doing an investigation and we'd like to talk to you," Moscow told him. "I'll have to get back to you," Altman replied. Soon after, Moscow learned that Altman had hired Robert Fiske the former United States attorney for the Southern District and one of the top litigators in the country.

Fiske then appeared in Moscow's office. "If you want to meet with my client, you will have to give him immunity," Moscow remembers Fiske telling him. "I said, 'You have to tell me what I am giving him immunity for. What has he done that is wrong? I am just doing an investigation.' " "He hasn't done anything wrong," Moscow remembers Fiske saying. "I'll give him that much immunity," Moscow replied. Fiske has a different recollection: "I remember telling John that I

[illegible] just come into the case and as far as I knew my client had done nothing wrong.''

Robert Altman was now appearing to pull every lever he could. In September of 1990, after Clifford and Altman had been asked to testify by Senate investigators, a B.C.C.I. lawyer wrote a confidential [illegible] Altman and another B.C.C.I. attorney, it said, were 'doing everything within their power to call in 'political markers.' Consequently, it may be that Altman. . . will succeed. . . and not end up testifying before the Kerry Committee.''

That autumn, Moscow learned that the Bank of England, suspecting fraud, had asked Price Waterhouse to conduct a special audit of B.C.C.I. The audit showed billions of dollars that had vanished, false accounts, rotten loans, and frauds so large it was impossible to calculate their size. The Price Waterhouse accountants went to Luxembourg to discuss their findings with representatives of the Abu Dhabi shareholders, for they would have to cover the bank's losses. (Soon after, Clifford and Altman resigned.) At the same time, the accountants sent a copy of the audit to the Bank of England. Subpoenas flew out of Manhattan Criminal Court as the prosecutors tried to get their hands on the Price Waterhouse audit. By this time, Moscow was working with the Federal Reserve, which was also investigating B.C.C.I.

''I was very much the young kid with the stick prodding the elephant,'' Moscow told me, referring to the Federal Reserve. ''We were hitting a brick wall—the Bank of England wouldn't give us anything, Price Waterhouse couldn't give us anything.''

In November, the Federal Reserve finally demanded a copy of the B.C.C.I. audit, but Moscow still needed cooperation from the British. It was then that Robert Morgenthau, without federal assistance, pulled in his own nets. He contacted Eddie George, the deputy governor of the Bank of England. Morgenthau reminisced about his time in England during the war. ''They spoke about people they knew in common,'' says Moscow. ''Morgenthau told George, 'We are going to charge this bank,' '' Cherkasky recounts. '' 'And when we charge them, you are going to be looked at publicly. We would like to be able to say that the Bank of England helped us.' ''

Morgenthau was now in high gear. He called Steve Kaufman, a prominent lawyer and close friend who had once worked for him and now represented Price Waterhouse. Kaufman in turn persuaded the English accountants to come to New York and meet with the D.A. Once he had them in his office, Morgenthau put his arm around the audit partner and showed him the framed letters from Lord Lothian to his father. ''In no time the Price Waterhouse accountants were on board and helping,'' Kaufman told me.

Acting on a tip, investigators from the Federal Reserve took off for Abu Dhabi—and found a windfall of bank documents stacked in crates. After rummaging through the records, they called Moscow. ''I think we have found what we are looking for,'' one said. What they had found were documents that showed the ownership link between B.C.C.I. and First American.

With Thornburgh gone, Justice now has about fifty-five staff members and seven grand juries assigned to the B.C.C.I. case.

In March of 1991, the Fed shut down B.C.C.I. in the United States. In New York, Morgenthau was moving closer to his first indictment. His office would soon be crowded with Peruvian officials who were ready to testify that B.C.C.I. had paid $3 million to obtain a foothold within Peruvian banks. Although the Federal Reserve had been carrying the oar for the investigation, that spring Morgenthau discovered he needed further cooperation from the Justice Department.

But when the Manhattan D.A.'s investigators asked the Tampa prosecutors to release the B.C.C.I. tapes, they were told ''those tapes do not exist,'' according to Cherkasky. ''They not only lied to us, they lied to the Federal Reserve,'' Morgenthau told me. ''We would fly assistants to Tampa and they would come back empty-handed. . . . I have never been lied to by another U.S. Attorney's Office until this investigation,'' Michael Cherkasky told me.

The tension between the Manhattan D.A. and the Justice Department would reach its peak in confrontations between Robert Morgenthau and Robert Mueller, the head of the Criminal Division in Washington. As a general matter, the Justice Department resists efforts by local prosecutors or congressional committees to interfere with its investigative efforts. Richard Thornburgh, then attorney general, had been ignoring the crusade of Senator Kerry since the early days of the Manuel Noriega case. ''Our experience has been one of almost pathological resistance whether we have been trying to help them or whether we have been trying to get information,'' Kerry's counsel, Jonathan Winer, told me. ''In some cases they actually prevented us from deposing B.C.C.I. witnesses on the absurd theory that it would interfere with their Noriega case.''

''We have been cooperative with Senator Kerry's staff to the extent that it wouldn't damage ongoing criminal proceedings,'' Robert Mueller told me. What really happened at the Justice Department? Observers feel that Mueller was in a difficult position. He only took over the case in July 1991 and appeared to be unable to quickly reverse the judgment that Thornburgh had made regarding the handling of the B.C.C.I. case. ''We would walk into the boss's office,'' Cherkasky remembers, ''and we would hear him say on the telephone to Bob Mueller, 'Bob, if you want to play that game, we will play that game. You behave that way and we will behave that way. It is going to be two ways! You think you can get away with this. You can't. And we don't need you.' ''

In July 1991, after B.C.C.I. was shut down worldwide, Clark Clifford finally arrived at the offices of the Manhattan D.A. to be interviewed by the prosecutors. There was a palpable excitement when Clifford, an icon of the Democratic Party, appeared on Centre Street. He walked slowly and carried his trademark fedora. He answered many questions with historical digressions, a style which had been effective in the past. It was a strat-

for the young prosecutors to listen to the stories-within-stories.

"I asked him if he had ever asked Adham if he was ever involved in Saudi intelligence," Moscow told me, "and he said, 'No.' I asked him, 'Why not?' and he said it was none of his business. I have to tell you that offended me."

Morgenthau stayed out of the room when Clifford was being interviewed. "I thought we would have to physically restrain the boss," Mike Cherkasky told me. "He was dying to come in, but he knew he could be called as a potential witness if he was a party to Clifford's interview."

In his interviews in New York, Altman was more emotional than Clifford. At times, he was near tears and mentioned his anxiety over the investigation and his finances, now that the law firm had broken up. "I kind of feel sorry for the guy," one prosecutor told me.

December 1991: It was a few days before Christmas and the press conference in Morgenthau's office to announce the B.C.C.I. plea was packed with reporters. Bob Morgenthau had been anticipating this moment for months, and his staff had worked the phones to get the word out. Morgenthau's blue leather chairs, which were usually around his conference table, were arranged in even rows. As always, a particularly handsome picture of John Kennedy was placed at a certain angle on a bookcase behind where Morgenthau was seated so it would appear on the nightly news. The reporters filed in early and listened patiently as Morgenthau read through the entire press release of the B.C.C.I. plea. It was an extraordinary triumph because the Manhattan D.A. shared the plea with the Justice Department. Morgenthau's campaign to turn the Justice Department around had finally worked. With Thornburgh gone, Justice now has about fifty-five full-time staff members and seven grand juries assigned to the case.

"Finally, they have realized the enormity of this case!" Morgenthau had told me a few days earlier. He was, he said, "getting tremendous cooperation" from William Barr, Thornburgh's successor. Now when Mike Cherkasky went to see Bob Mueller, he was ushered into a room that had special electronic maps and red telephones that seemed to connect to every point in the world. "It's sci-fi down here," Cherkasky told me, "a study in contrasts from our dump. What a difference in their attitude! Now I get driven to the airport."

At his press conference, Morgenthau was lavish in his praise for the new Justice Department. "Are you prepared to say that the U.S. Justice Department afforded you 'unprecedented cooperation' early and responded early to the allegations brought to its attention?" one reporter asked. Morgenthau was all ready for the question. "I have a very short memory span—it may be a sign of my age," he said. The room erupted with laughter, for Morgenthau's conflicts had become common knowledge. "We have had excellent cooperation in the last month," he added.

"Mr. Morgenthau, have you taken at face value the assertions of Clark Clifford and Mr. Altman that they were duped in this matter?" another reporter asked.

"No," he said firmly. "This [plea] doesn't wrap it up at all."

A few weeks later, I returned to criminal court. Morgenthau had had a possible major piece of luck. The former head of the Washington B.C.C.I. office, Sani Ahmad, had been arrested when he returned to the United States for seventy-two hours to try to sell his house in Bethesda. Ahmad had fled to Pakistan a year earlier after receiving a phone call from John Moscow to come to New York for an interview. Morgenthau had gotten a tip from the Fed that Ahmad had slipped back into the country, and passed it on to the F.B.I. He was a potential bombshell witness for the Manhattan D.A. because, as Moscow phrased it, "he might be able to explain how $23 million flowed through the Washington office of B.C.C.I." Investigators suspect much of that money was used to bribe U.S. government officials and Ahmad presumably could reveal their names. Another item of interest is a memo in which, according to prosecutors, Ahmad is referring to Manuel Noriega: "It may be worth mentioning that we have placed over $13 million in different U.K. branches [of B.C.C.I.] for a single customer from Panama."

Ahmad's hearing was scheduled for Part 70, a large courtroom filled with drug cases and legal-aid lawyers. "Stop snappin' that gum!" the clerk yelled into the courtroom as two impeccably dressed lawyers arrived, clearly representing the B.C.C.I. man. Ahmad never appeared, and the judge, at the insistence of his lawyers, closed the proceedings.

The lawyers left the courtroom for a conference. They moved quickly down the long beige corridors of criminal court, their heels clicking on the tile. "What is your name?" I asked one of them. In any other case it would have been an innocent question, but not with B.C.C.I., a swamp of questions with few answers. "We don't have to tell you anything," he said. □

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ARIES ♈ *March 21–April 19*

There's something liberating right now about speeding through a yellow light with the music blasting. Blame it on the current transit of Mars through Aquarius, which lasts until March 27. During times like these, normally buttoned-up Marines go AWOL, and typical suburban matrons throw their apron on the kitchen floor and head for the nearest affair. Do something radical to *un*do any stereotype of your gender (an issue that has plagued you for years), but just don't get *too* wild. Mars enters Pisces at the end of March, and while you may be having a ball, bear in mind that hefty sins demand hefty penance.

TAURUS ♉ *April 20–May 20*

You are more outer-directed than usual and much more concerned about what people think of you. Unchecked, you could become more obsessed with your public image than most of the candidates running for president. Mars, Saturn, Pluto, and Jupiter are playing a tense little number straight into April. This indicates a dynamic conflict between career and personal relationships, so *do not bring the boss home for dinner*. Luckily, a few planets in Pisces will take some of the pressure off. Find a friend who let ambition go a long time ago to remind you that there is definitely life after the casting couch.

GEMINI ♊ *May 21–June 21*

Even when Mercury isn't retrograde, you get caught with three people penciled in for the same lunch and fifty-three things you'd like to do before the weekend. Overcommitment causes many Geminis to go berserk and flip, like the too tightly wound toy car that crashes into a wall and turns over with its wheels spinning. With Venus and Mars passing from your 9th house to your 10th, make an effort over the next four to six weeks to regain credibility. Mercury *does* go retrograde from March 16 to April 8, so although you will probably have absolutely no idea where you're going, be a good Gemini and go anyway.

CANCER ♋ *June 22–July 22*

Cancers are particularly susceptible to extremes. You either yawn with boredom because nothing interesting is happening and probably never will, or you scream in terror because the horses have gone crazy and the wagon is headed for the canyon. Why not accept the fact that you are happiest in those calm moments after one disaster has been averted and before the next one strikes? With planets straddling your 8th and 9th houses until April, you had better add to your overpreparedness for earthquakes the heady feeling of having hope for the future. Could it be that you're ready to share control with the universe?

LEO ♌ *July 23–August 22*

Whether it will ultimately prove to be in your self-interest or not, a curious and positive change has come over you. You've become aware of other people's needs. While you can still prattle on about the latest episode in your ongoing soap opera, you are more committed to making a relationship work. You are also more likely to follow through on your promises, and not just say anything to make yourself look good. Face it, though: empathy, monogamy, and loyalty are great, but they do get stale, as you'll discover right before and after the full moon on March 18. You have needs, too. Let people know about them.

VIRGO ♍ *August 23–September 22*

With planets in your 6th and 7th houses, a full moon in Virgo on March 18, and Mercury going retrograde on the 16th, here's the dish for the next month: Virgos, of all people, need to be kissed on the neck until they can forget about all those things they have left undone in order to have a relationship in the first place. Fortunately, it doesn't take much to seduce you, since you can manage to get giddy just by sucking on a couple of rum balls. But can you really let go of your sober sense of sin, hygiene, and responsibility and *not* start thinking of the mess on your desk when someone is whispering in your ear?

LIBRA ♎ *September 23–October 23*

Here's the good news: while Mercury is retrograde between March 16 and April 8, you can postpone all major decisions even if partnerships stall or wedding plans falter. Though one person may be more up-front about it than the other, there are usually *two pairs* of cold feet involved in the act of withdrawal. Step back, take a breather, read contracts over carefully, ask questions, and listen to everything that is not said. Why is this good news? Because Libras are always relieved to hear they can delay decisions and keep options open, and do *not* have to get caught saying yes when they really mean no.

SCORPIO ♏ *October 24–November 21*

You may have reason to believe that there is a spy in your outfit. True, one member of your little family now needs space to act out and be heard, but this is owing to a Mars-Pluto square in mid-March and a Saturn-Pluto square later this year. Handling the situation will definitely require cautious diplomacy. If indeed little chicks are making hatching noises, don't just ship them off to Siberia or whack them out of existence as if you were splitting a carcass down the middle, just because they disagree with you. Discuss differences calmly and leave the guns on the table. There's creativity in the tension.

SAGITTARIUS ♐ *November 22–December 21*

You've got corn to pop, hot chocolate on the stove, and enough Duraflame logs to last till summer. And you're tickled to death when the weather report tells you to stay indoors and get cozy. You want to have a family again, to reach out, touch kin, and have homemade soup. You are a Sadge, though. Therefore, you've got the yen to do Ireland for a weekend and maybe hit Mexico for some sun. This paradox is due to a 3rd-and-4th-house pileup of planets and a 4th-and-10th-house full moon on March 18. The big question is: Do you get out there and appear *on* television or just stay in bed and watch it?

CAPRICORN ♑ *December 22–January 19*

Your dilemma is one all creative people share. And contrary to what you may think, Capricorn *is* a creative sign. Cézanne was a Capricorn. Matisse was a Capricorn. Did *they* sit around fearing that if they went ahead and did what they believed in they'd be homeless in their old age? Maybe they did, but it certainly didn't stop them from producing. This is the time for you to produce. Simply find the happy medium between the images of yourself as the high-minded genius everyone should support and the Kafkaesque creature who sells atomic secrets to the highest bidder for the rent money.

AQUARIUS ♒ *January 20–February 18*

Giving yourself over to a cause greater than yourself is probably the path toward salvation all right, but what do you do with all the energy and anger that is surfacing at the moment? By mid-March, Mars will be setting off a square between Saturn and Pluto that will culminate in about a year. There is potential for great achievement now. This is definitely a control issue, though, and the more you act out, the more entrenched and defensive other people could become. Still, you must act now, and you cannot remain silent. The only way to avoid war is to admit that it's already happening.

PISCES ♓ *February 19–March 20*

Even under the best of circumstances, you're not sure if it really happened or if you imagined it—"it" being a combination of things you can't put your finger on but would swear on a stack of Bibles were going on Somewhere Behind Locked Doors. This is a handy talent when it comes to sniffing out conspiracy, but it's definitely *not* the ticket to peaceful relationships. The transit of Mars through your 12th house until March 27 will heighten this type of awareness, stimulate fantasies, and exacerbate feelings that people are laughing at you. That could really make you mad. Just don't mistake a loved one for a prowler.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TIM SHEARER

By Michael Lutin

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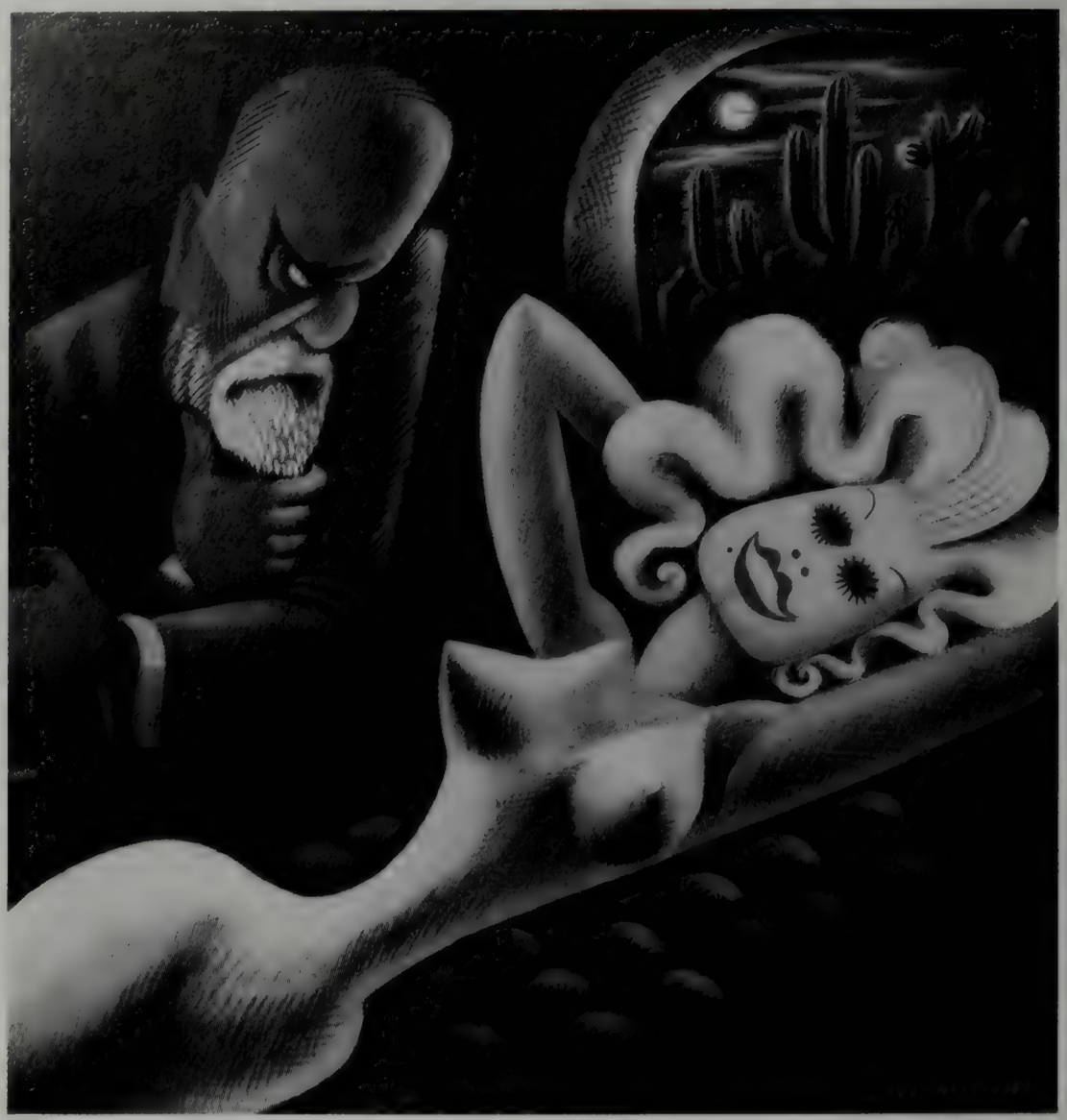

Sigmund Freud and Jean Harlow

Vanity Fair, May 1935

In May 1935, *V.F.*'s contributing illustrator Miguel Covarrubias was once again caught with his Freudian slip showing in that peculiar manifestation of wish fulfillment known as the "Impossible Interview." This time the irrepressible matchmaker had the father of psychoanalysis flipping his id over couch hot potato Jean Harlow, who always attracted more than her share of father figures and had just induced another wave of Venus envy with her latest movie, *China Seas*. While no doubt unconsciously adorning the analytic lab with provocative décor, Covarrubias provided the good doctor with a dilemma of man and superego. (Sigmund: "You don't understand, Miss Harlow. I want to psychoanalyze your psyche. I want to study your inhibitions." Jean: "You mean exhibitions.") Unfortunately, no mention of the libidinous blonde appears in *The Diary of Sigmund Freud: 1929–1939* (Robert Stewart/Scribner's), a volume of Freud's cryptic notes on the last, tormented decade of his life, extensively annotated by Michael Molnar of the Freud Museum in London. But, as the doctor himself would surely have diagnosed, it doesn't hurt to dream.

Illustration by COVARRUBIAS

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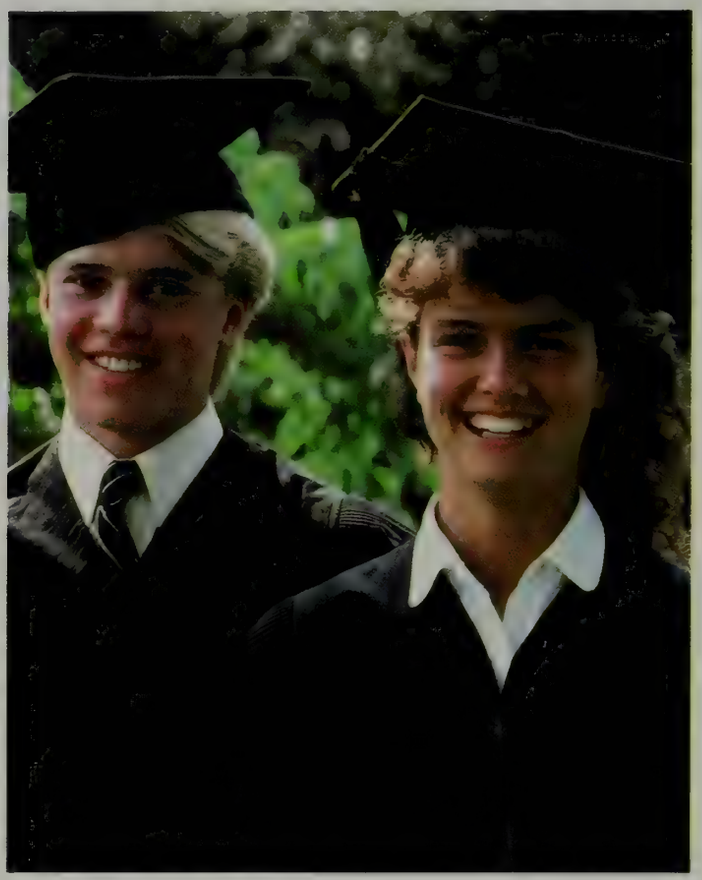

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